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A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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IDAHO TOM, The Young Outlaw of Silverland; OR, THE HUNTERS OF THE WILD WEST.

BY OLL COOMES,

Author of "Dakota Dan," "Bowie-knife Ben," "Old Hurricane," "Hawkeye Harry," "Death Notch, the Destroyer," "One-armed Alf," "Red Rob," etc.

CHAPTER I. IDAHO TOM.

HIGH above the level of the sea reposed Lake Tahoe in its mountain thralldom.

The white, crispy snows of perpetual winter looked down from amid the clouds upon the silent, glassy sheet.

The grim old mountain seemed to rear its head aloft as if proud of the tiny jewel it held clasped to its rugged bosom, and in which its storm-scarred face had been reflected, no doubt since creation's rosy morn.

To and fro around the verdant shores, in and out of the shadows and sunshine of a summer day, like a weaver's shuttles, played the graceful deer, the fox and the hare; while a thousand plumed wings flecked the glassy bosom of the deep with their swift moving shadows.

From the craggy heights almost lost in the clouds of heaven, where the monarch of the air whetted his beak and laughed his maniac laugh, the mountain goat looked down from its wintry home upon the smiling summer-land.

The air was still fresh and fragrant with the cool breath of morning. The breeze toyed with the somber pines as a thoughtless maiden toys with the rose; all the machinery of nature was in motion with the pulsing, throbbing, thrilling life of another day, when a bird started up on airy wing with a frightened scream, and soaring aloft, winged its way from the northern shore of the lake.

The cause of this alarm soon became manifest: a man whistling a sprightly lay issued suddenly from the great pine woods, his feet keeping time to the tune he was trilling.

On the shore of Silver Bay, a circular body of water joined to Tahoe by a narrow strait, the man paused, and, doffing his hat, bowed to the figure of himself that was reflected in the glassy waves.

"Good-morning, my romantic vagabond," he said, in a voice almost musical; then he broke into a peal of laughter, soft and pleasant as a maiden's.

Idaho Tom, the Outlaw of Silverland, was a fine specimen of physical manhood, though a mere boy in years. In spite of his youth, however, his name was upon every lip in all Nevada—at times coupled with crimes that were in violation of the laws of God and man; then again deeds of kindness, mercy and daring were attributed to the wild, wayward adventurer. And as the good in the heart of Idaho Tom neutralized the bad, he was admired as well as hated; respected as well as feared. He was a warm friend, a deadly foe—withal, a strange, mysterious boy, who seemed to have been thrown loose upon the cold world, to be buffeted about by the winds of adversity.

In years he was not over nineteen. His form was straight as an Indian's, rather slender, but possessed of the muscular development of an athlete and the wiry suppleness of a gymnast. A pleasant, dark-gray eye, keen as the hawk's, shot its fiery glances from beneath heavy, arching brows. The nose was just aquiline enough to give an expression of Roman courage and firmness to the character.

He was dressed in a suit that fitted close and neat, showing to advantage the outlines of his fine form.

He carried a small breech-loading rifle slung at his back by means of an ornamented strap passing over his right shoulder, across his breast and under his left arm. A pair of revolvers and a hunting-knife were in his girdle.

He was followed by a large sleek grayhound, which, for grace of movement and delicate symmetry of form, could scarcely be equaled by the gazelle. Around the animal's neck was a silver collar fastened by a tiny padlock. The name of the young master was engraved in script upon the jeweled band.

"And so we're standing upon the shores of the wonderful Tahoe, Lance, my dog," the youth said, to his dumb companion, who evinced an almost human comprehension of what was said, and answered by thrusting his sharp muzzle through the half-closed fingers of his master. "Yes, for the first time we are standing on Tahoe's romantic shore. And oh, for a draught of cool water! A long walk we've had of it, with the mercury at a boil. But this sight repays us; it is beautiful, sublime! Oh, Tahoe!—lake of the clouds, with the snow-helmeted mountains mirrored



"And so we're standing upon the shores of the wonderful Tahoe, Lance, my dog!" the youth said.

in thy depths! Beautiful captive, held in chains by rock-ribbed hills! What a sight! Reposing in the lap of summer, while from yon mountain height winter shakes his hoary head at thee! But, fiddsticks! what does all this amount to, anyhow? It's lavishing unappreciated romance upon the 'desert air,' and so I—"

His meditations were interrupted by a movement of his grayhound, whose nose was thrust upward, while his keen eyes searched the cliffs that rose behind him. The delicate nostrils quivered with the intensity of his excitement. That he had detected something that boded danger, his young master had not a doubt. The youth watched the animal until his eyes finally rested upon the object they had been searching for; then the lad turned and glanced up the cliff just in time to see a plumed head disappear behind a sharp ledge about forty rods away.

"Ghost of Caesar!" exclaimed the boy, unslinging his rifle, "that was an Injin's top-knot, or else I'm a wandering lunatic. And now, Lance, my dog, we've got to look a little out and keep ourselves seldom. So let's to shadow and wait for time to adjust matters."

The Young Outlaw of Silverland moved back from the bay and up the cliff until he had gained the cover of a clump of bushes. Here he threw himself upon the earth, and with a reckless disregard of danger, assumed a position of ease, trusting solely to his noble hound for security.

Nearly the whole of the bay was now concealed from his view by the dense shrubbery. Only a little cove or indentation, in the shore at the foot of the cliff before him, was visible; and upon its bosom was an object that arrested his attention.

It was a canoe, or rather a skiff, for it was provided with oars that now hung loose in the row-locks. It was a small affair, and yet for neatness of construction and symmetrical shape, it was such as was seldom seen in Western waters. The inside was painted red, and the outside streaked and ringed in just such fanciful colors as would captivate the soul of an Indian. At the prow was the figure-head of a swan's neck and head, the former tapering gracefully up from the body of the boat—the whole evincing the work of a skillful artisan.

Idaho Tom became so deeply interested in the handsome little craft that he entirely forgot the plumed head he had seen, up behind the ledge. He had not the remotest idea how the boat came there, who the owner was, nor why he had lavished such skill and labor on a thing so insignificant in general usefulness. He argued to himself that it must have been made where style and beauty were the first considerations, and had been carried there by some person or persons who were indulging in a season of hunting and fishing around Tahoe. If such was the case, then the owners were not far away, and the young "vagabond," as he termed himself, resolved to await their return.

Something about the skiff, the solitude of the place, and the stealthy movement of that

plumed head above, excited the youth's curiosity to the highest degree, and, with the patience of an Indian, he waited and watched.

The sun mounted higher and higher, as the minutes wore away into hours. Birds chirped and sung in the stately pines above and below. Still and silent upon the glassy waves lay the gay little craft.

To Idaho Tom, waiting and watching grew to be monotonous, and he finally became drowsy, reclining under the murmuring pines. But the time was all his own, however heavy it hung upon his hands. He had but one master to serve, and that was himself.

Lance suddenly started up, and, with ears erect, glanced down at the little skiff. The young master rose to a sitting posture, and glancing down toward the bay, uttered a soft whistle, indicative of surprise.

Out from the adjacent shadows he saw an Indian creep with the stealthiness of a serpent. The face of the redskin was all aglow with savage curiosity. His keen, black eye were fixed, with a covetous glare, upon the little boat that lay motionless upon the bosom of the bay.

With hesitating footsteps, the warrior continued to advance toward the water's edge. Now and then he paused as if in doubt, and glanced beyond the skiff—out over the bay. By his movements, Idaho Tom thought there must be something abroad which the Indian feared; but the intervening foliage and forest shut off the view.

After considerable time spent in retreating and advancing, the savage finally reached the

water's brink. Here he stood for full a minute, half crouching, and watching something out over the bay. But the desire to possess the gay little craft upon the water, seemed to have got the better of his fears, and he cautiously entered the boat, and gazed around him, up and down the bay, as if in doubt which course to take, in his flight with the skiff. Finally, however, he seated himself upon the thwart, grasped the oars, and attempted to turn the craft out from shore. But, at the same instant, a cry escaped his lips, and his whole form was shaken, as if with a fit. His face became contorted with all the horrible agony of a man upon the rack, and, still clinging to the oars, he tugged and quivered, as if trying to tear himself away.

"Great ghost of Caesar!" exclaimed the young outlaw, starting to his feet. "What in the name of mystery ails the painted vagabond? Is he possessed of the devil?"

CHAPTER II. THE FLOATING ISLAND.

IDAHO TOM arose from his seat, adjusted his side weapons, and strode from his concealment. Down the hill he went, straight toward the savage, with his grayhound at his heels.

The contortions of the red-skin seemed to be growing worse each moment, as he tugged and pulled at the oars, until it seemed as though the veins in his face and neck would burst.

"Harkee, red-skin!" exclaimed the young outlaw, in a clear, distinct tone, "art thou possessed of Satan? or hast thou intemperate habits induced serpents to infest thy moccasins? Speak out, you son of a Plute, or I'll spring a leak in thy anatomy."

In answer, a horrible groan issued from the lips of the savage.

Idaho Tom advanced still closer to the water's edge, but the Indian seemed to take no notice of his presence. Then Tom uttered a sharp whistle, and his grayhound barked, but the savage still continued his violent contortions.

Idaho Tom was completely nonplussed. He saw that the red-skin was not attempting to deceive him, but could form no idea of the cause of such sufferings—the invisible power that held him there in the canoe, in all evident agony. But, even while he stood speculating over the matter, the Indian released his hold upon the oars, sprang to his feet, and, turning his head, glanced wildly at the young outlaw. His face was covered with great drops of sweat, and wore a look frightful to behold. His breath came quick and hard, and his very frame trembled like a reed in the wind; then, with a low cry, the savage sprang from the canoe, and fled away into the woods.

"Verily, I say, that beats his Satanic majesty all hollow," exclaimed Idaho Tom. "But I reckon he is subject to spasms and had an attack. But now then, what have we out there?"

It was apparently a floating island, which for the first time arrested his attention. It stood out some fifty or sixty rods from the shore, near the center of the bay.

For several moments this object held the attention of the youth, for something about it excited his curiosity to the highest pitch. He was satisfied it was a floating island. He could see that a perfect forest of shrubbery and vegetation was growing upon it, and in its midst stood half a dozen tents. This told that the island was inhabited, and that its inhabitants were civilized people.

Who were they? The Young Outlaw of Silverland resolved to know and to hazard much in a flying visit to the island, by means of the little skiff that lay at his feet.

Stepping into the light craft, Tom called his dog in and then seated himself. He took hold of the right oar, and raising it out of the water, glanced along the slender blade with a critical eye. Then he seized the left oar; but, simultaneous with the act, a cry burst from his lips and he was pitched violently forward—prone in the boat, as if under the blow of an invisible hand.

In an instant the youth was upon his feet, gazing around him with a half-puzzled, half-terrified look.

"Tornadoes and earthquakes! Who struck me, Lance?" burst from his lips. "Oh, Lord, but it was a socker!—pulled every nerve in my body. Durn the canoe!—it's enchanted, and I'm going to vacate. I've changed my notion,

old pard, 'bout going to the island," and taking up his rifle, Idaho Tom leaped lightly ashore.

With a puzzled look he stopped and regarded the little boat for a moment; then, with a muttered imprecation, he turned and moved away, whistling merrily to overcome his confusion.

Up on the hillside, where he could overlook the bay and the floating island, he came to a halt, and among the dense shrubbery concealed himself.

The floating island now became the first object of consideration. Its shape was rectangular, half cut in two by a little cove or harbor in the side. The whole was covered with a growth of vegetation which had evidently been transplanted there by the hand of man. Here and there were little clusters of flowers. Aquatic plants and moss grew along the margin, trailing their green festoonery in the water and concealing the ragged edges of the island.

In this shrubbery the tops of several tents were distinctly visible. Two or three canoes lay in the little harbor. But no sign of life was visible about the place unless it were the small birds that twittered around it. The island, as well as all its surroundings, wore an air of incongruous solitude. The unnatural silence seemed like a solemn admonition to the young outlaw to depart at once.

Something rustled the bushes near him, and the next moment a little figure swept past him like the wind. It was the figure of a woman—a young girl rather, upon whose white face was an expression of terror.

That she was being pursued—fleeing from some one or something, was evident from the thrashing noise in the shrubbery behind her, and then a powerful Indian, who was panting like an overworked ox, glided into view. His form was bent forward, and like a bound he was following upon the trail of the fair stranger.

Only a foot or two of dense shrubbery separated the youth from the point where the warrior must pass; and, acting under the impulse of the instant, Tom thrust the muzzle of his rifle through the shrubbery, and the red-skin stumbled and fell over it.

"Avant!" exclaimed Idaho Tom, springing from his concealment and confronting the savage with a cocked revolver; "avant, old morning-glory!"

The savage was on his feet in an instant. The eyes of the two natural foes met. The savage's face assumed a look of consuming rage, and that of the young outlaw a smile of grim triumph. The savage grasped his knife—Idaho raised his revolver. The savage uttered an indignant grunt—Idaho made a wry face at him.

"Are you a man, or a sneaking wolf?" demanded Tom, contemptuously.

"Ugh! me red-skin brave," was the fierce reply.

"A romantic red-skin you are!" responded Tom, "to go trailing a woman—a helpless little girl. By the great ghost of old Caesar, I've a notion to let blizzer."

"White boy talk big," said the Indian, manifesting no fear, evidently to talk the youth off his guard.

"I'm an avalanche, Ingin, when I get a-going; and that dog there is a perfect tornado. Between us two, we are mortal destruction—a perfect plague; if you draw that old saw-blade of a knife, you're a goner. I'll blow you plumb through, I will!"

"The sound of your pistol bring lots Ingins then," replied the cunning foe.

"I don't care; if that mountain dissolves into its weight the next minute, I'll blow you to Guinea if you draw that knife. Ingin, I'm a boy, as you see, and I'm not any too steady in the nerves; and for fear my finger give this trigger a little pull to see how much it'll bear without going off, I'll tell you what you'd better do, or die. Turn your back upon the sublime Tahoe, and with the stately tread of a war-horse ascend your cliff. Pint your classic nose directly toward your lightning-riven pine. Remember, great warrior of the guttersnipe tribe, that if you turn your princely head during the ascent, it will be to invoke a shot from my rifle. Do you comprehend?"

"Ugh!" was the indignant reply.

"I'll tell you again: turn your greasy back on the lake, walk straight up the hill toward that blasted pine, and when you get there, I'll trouble you no further. If you look back while ascending the hill, I'll shoot you."

The Indian understood this, also the situation he was in. Without a word he turned and moved away—not even a look implying fear or trepidation.

Straight toward the tree indicated he made his way with unflinching footsteps.

With a smile of triumph upon his face, Idaho Tom watched him until he was nearly to the tree, then turned and looked for the maiden he had so opportunely rescued from captivity.

He saw a canoe glide around an angle of the floating island, and in it was seated the maiden, the object of his search.

"Ghost of old Caesar!" burst mechanically from the youth's lips. Then he dropped the butt of his rifle to the ground, and leaning upon the muzzle gazed abstractedly away into space. His mind had been suddenly wrapt in some vague fantasy—a spell that he could not shake off. It had come upon him suddenly. A face rose up before him—the face of the fair fugitive that had so recently fled past him.

"Lance," he at length said, glancing sorrowfully down at his dog, "you have always occupied the first place in my heart—always until now. You are only second now, Lance; only second, old dog."

A deep silence followed. Both dog and master seemed engaged in thought.

A gentle breeze swept up from the bay, rife with the sweet breath of the wildwoods. The tall pines whispered among themselves, but the youth heeded them not.

Suddenly upon the silence burst the whistle crack of a rifle, and staggering forward with a cry of agony, Idaho Tom sunk to earth.

An Indian war-whoop told who was the victor, at last.

CHAPTER III.

TOM IS WANTED—DEAD OR ALIVE.

THE warrior, having left his rifle near the blasted pine when he started in pursuit of the maiden, found it ready for his grasp, and turning in his flight he took a deadly aim at the head of the young man, who, in his abstraction, had forgotten all his caution and prudence. The rifle cracked, and, with a wild war-whoop, the red-skin drew his knife and went bounding down the hill to complete his victory by securing the youth's scalp.

As he approached the hound crouched by his young master's body, looked up at the hideous red-skin with an almost human expression, wagged his tail in a friendly, conciliatory manner as if begging the savage to spare his master from mutilation.

But there was no mercy in the red-man's heart. He came on and bent over the silent, prostrate form of the youth. He twined his fingers in the glossy locks of the boy's head, when the eyes of the young outlaw suddenly opened; his hand flew quickly up. It held a cocked revolver. The weapon flashed in the warrior's face, and with a moan the outwitted wretch sunk to earth, a lifeless mass.

Tom sprung to his feet. He had not even been wounded, but the savage's bullet had cut uncomfortably close to his ear. Quick as was the shot the boy's act was as rapid, and the ruse resulted in the death of his treacherous foe.

Shouldering his rifle, Idaho Tom tripped lightly down the hill to the shore of the bay, where still reposed that gay little skiff.

"Yes, there you are still," he mused, addressing the skiff, "and wouldn't I give a bag of the most precious dust in all Nevada to know what ails you? But, great ghost of Caesar! I know you are possessed of the devil, and my festive little gig, I am going to keep an eye upon you. But, for the time being, adieu," and turning upon his heel he moved away up the valley leading toward Virginia City, the nearest point of civilization.

By this time night was coming on; the blue of the eastern sky was deepening into somberness; the mysterious voices of the night had begun their weird song; and a light breeze springing up went rustling through the swaying pines and moaning among the mountain canons.

Whistling merrily, Idaho Tom pushed rapidly on. His whole existence seemed like perpetual sunshine. His temperament was such as permitted him to accept the bright side of life. Nothing ever troubled him. The love of fun and adventure were the predominant traits of his character; and it was these that had given him the name he bore, the Outlaw of Silverland. He was not, in a literal sense, a criminal; nor was he a transgressor on the laws of the territory, which laws admitted of considerable latitude in those days. Nevada was a mining country, and in the "flush days" everybody ran wild; society was permitted, or rather compelled, to arrange its own police regulations, if such a thing as "society" could be said to have had an existence in the territory at that date. Nearly everybody was busy looking after fortunes, and although many dark deeds had been committed with Idaho Tom's name, no one took the time to investigate the stories; and as he conducted himself honorably as a citizen of Virginia City and stockholder in a paying silver-lode, no one interfered with his liberties. The name by which he was known had nothing to do with his social status, as it was but characteristic of the nomenclature of all mining countries.

Tom was at home either in the parlor or bar-room, in church or in the gambling-house; and always of the same temperament under ordinary circumstances. He did not hesitate to take a hand at poker, or any other game from which he could derive the least bit of sport; and no matter how his luck went, Idaho Tom was the same.

Professionally he was a miner, but he loved the free air of heaven, the sunshine and the excitement of the world too much to shut himself up in a gloomy mine; and so he was content to take less of the profits and let others do the mining, while he gave vent to his exuberant spirits by rambling through the mountains. He had no friends in the place—no one to look after—no one to depend upon him, so he was not troubled about providing for the proverbial "rainy day," and his profits in the mine went freely. He was always willing that the day's earnings should be the price of an evening's entertainment at the gambling-table, for in Virginia City in those days the mining interest centered on the gambling-table.

As he hurried along the valley homeward, the thoughts of the young outlaw dwelt upon the face of the maiden whom he had seen—saved from Indian captivity—that day. It was a sweet, fair face set in golden hair, with dark-blue eyes and pearly teeth, that rose before him as if to mock his already captive heart. Then he would ask himself the questions: "Who was she? Who dwelt upon the island? and what mystery was connected with that skiff? Surely she was not a being from fairy-land? The island was not the home of outlaws; nor the skiff enchanted."

Thus musing, as he moved along, his thoughts became more and more perturbed, and it was a relief when he suddenly discovered the twinkling of a light some distance to his left. Pausing he gave utterance to a low whistle, a way he had of expressing sudden surprise.

That the mountains were infested with roving, hostile Indians Tom was well aware; and so the light admonished him of possible danger. There were, however, he happened to know, two or three mining parties out in the mountains on a prospecting tour, and the thought occurred to him that the light might be in the camp of one of these parties. He resolved to make a reconnaissance, and so bent his footsteps up the narrow defile leading toward the light.

The shadows of night were now gathered in the deep gorges and dense wooded valleys. The giant pines bowed to the rush of the night-wind. The howl of the wolves came down the valleys in quivering echoes. The droning of nocturnal wings filled the air. Strange sounds came from out the realms of Nowhere, and yet they were all but the throbbing pulsations of the dreamy night.

The sound of voices coming down the valley suddenly arrested his attention.

He had scarcely time to conceal himself when two men walking briskly passed him, going down the valley.

Soon they were out of hearing, when Tom resumed his journey toward the flickering light, which he soon approached near enough to see it was shining through the open window of a log cabin.

"Ghost of old Caesar!" exclaimed Tom, in astonishment, "a log-cabin here in this land of hills! What does it mean?"

The youth was astounded. This was something he had not been expecting to find. It was either the cabin of a company of miners, or the headquarters of a gang of robbers and outlaws. Which? He resolved to know.

Moving forward he boldly approached the cabin-door and rapped upon it with the butt of a revolver.

"Walk the chalk!" commanded a coarse, loud, but not unpleasant, voice, within.

The youth pushed the door open and crossed the threshold.

"Gosh, almighty, thunderation, stranger! 'scuse me—thought it war one of my friends," exclaimed a tall, lank, cadaverous-looking man—a genuine type of the proverbial Yankee—as he arose from his chair with apparent confusion and surprise.

"Then you are not in the habit of receiving callers?" was Tom's rejoinder, as he removed his hat and hung it upon the muzzle of his rifle.

"Callers!" exclaimed the astonished host, running his bony fingers through his long, yellow hair: "callers did ye say, youngster? Nary caller! Such a thing has never happened afore—never. It just flummixes me tectotally—ca'se I wa'n't 'specting ye. I ar'n't slicked up a bit, and things hangs a little loose and kiltory-like round the room. But then, seat yourself, stranger; rest—tarry—make yer self to home."

"Thank you," said the youth, dropping himself into an easy arm-chair made of withes and cushioned with soft skins and furs. "This is really a surprise; I didn't know there was a habitation within twenty miles of Tahoe—all ways heard so, at least."

"Ye have, eh? Reckon that's lots of things in this world you don't know anything 'bout. We've been here a year and more, prospectin' fur gold—that is the boys have, for I'm a free trapper by profession, and foller that business."

"Your friends find any silver or gold?"

"Devil take the nugget with a continental have they ever found," and the old trapper took a huge chew of tobacco, and began to manipulate his jaws vigorously, at the same time glancing interrogatively at his young guest.

Tom had taken in his surroundings at a glance. The cabin was large and roomy. A ladder in one corner led into the loft. The room was scantily furnished, yet bore an air of neatness which none but the deft fingers and ingenuity of woman could have wrought. In the corner of the room at the left of the fireplace was a large box fastened to the wall and securely closed. On the other side shelves had been erected on the wall, and upon these were arranged some dishes, pots and other culinary necessities, all in the neatest order.

A fire made of pine-knots burned upon the hearth, and an iron tea-kettle sitting before it sung merrily as the hot steam poured from its black throat.

Withal there was an air of domestic comfort about the place and a congenial, outspoken hospitality in the rude language of the host, that called up a train of tender thoughts in the mind of Idaho Tom.

The host and his guest seemed intuitively drawn into each other's confidence, and a general epitomizing of events of the day followed. The host gave his name as Zedekiah Dee, the Mad Trapper. He expressed great astonishment at what Tom had seen and experienced around Lake Tahoe.

"Wal, thar's many quar things in this world, Thomas," the old borderman said, expectorating the accumulations of half an hour's chewing into the fire.

"Lord, what a deluge!" thought Tom, then he spoke aloud: "Yes, I have found that out, friend Dee. Lake Tahoe has its share of queer things. But, perhaps you can throw some light on what I've been telling you?"

"Light! humph! thunder!" exclaimed Dee, "what light do you s'pose I can throw on sich things! Me and my friends hev been here a year, more or less, and durn the thing can we find out."

"Then you have no idea where that girl I saw belongs?"

"No more'n the man in the moon."

Tom made no reply, and for a moment there was a deep silence, broken only by the nasal song of the tea-kettle and the occasional snap of the fire.

"I'd give my interest in the lode to know who she is," Tom finally remarked.

"Even so," muttered Zedekiah, and shutting one eye, he aimed a torrent of tobacco-juice at a large red coal toppling on the end of a burning stick.

"I can't dismiss the thoughts of the girl from my mind."

"Shure ye wa'n't asleep and see'd the gal in a dream, are ye, Thomas?"

"Asleep—no; no more than I am this minute. I'd go my bottom dollar on that, Zedekiah."

"Quar, very quar indeed," and another drenching volley of tobacco-juice splattered among the hot embers.

Tom now noted a reticence in the conversation of his host which had not been manifested at first; and so the youth, as a matter of precaution, pressed him no further on points which he appeared to evade.

After a few minutes' further desultory talk, the trapper drew an old "bull's-eye" watch from his pocket, and consulting its hand on the face, said:

"Stranger—Thomas, it's ten o'clock, or very nigh it, I should think, judgin' by appearances here. T'at's my time to lay this little body down to rest. In fact, Tom, it ar'n't overly safe ad healthy to keep a life running in the shebang. Thar's many lopin' red-skins in these diggin's, and thar's no tellin' what designs they may have upon the place. If it be your wish to bunk here to-night, you will ascend that ladder, and in that corner of the cabin you'll find an arrangement that'd be soft to a wooden man to depose upon."

Tom took his rifle, and bidding his host good-night, ascended the ladder into the loft. He had no trouble in finding the "arrangement" spoken of, notwithstanding the darkness of the place. Without removing his clothes, the youth threw himself upon the couch, but not to sleep. He had a curiosity which he desired to gratify, and while he lay upon the rude bed, pondering over the events of the day, and waiting for some movement below, he suddenly heard a low, clicking sound like that made by a telegraphic battery.

At first he could not locate the noise, but upon closer listening he discovered that it originated in the room below.

Carefully Tom arose to a sitting posture and applied his eyes to a crack in the loft floor. But at this very instant the sound was discontinued.

He was in time, however, to see his host close the huge chest or box in the corner of the room below, heretofore mentioned, and resume his seat before the fire.

The youth kept his watch at the crack, and presently that mysterious clicking began again, and this time lasted for fully a minute. Tom had never heard such a noise before outside of a telegraph office, and he noticed that Zedekiah Dee smiled blandly and rubbed his hands with glee.

The young outlaw was in a quandary. He scarcely knew how to take the old trapper's movements, and while he was pondering over the matter, there came a thunderous rap on the door below, that caused an involuntary shudder to thrill through his whole body.

"Gosh almighty thunder!—that must be a young earthquake buttin' against that door," exclaimed Zedekiah Dee, starting to his feet.

"Who in the 'arnal nation be you out thar? Bring in yer corporosity."

The door opened and the huge, burly form of a white man stepped across the threshold, and pausing, stared insolently about the room. His bearded face, his savage garb, weapon-laden girdle, and whole bearing, bespoke, in plain language, the desperado.

"Eh, slid out, has he?" the man asked, fixing a pair of wolfish eyes upon the trapper.

"You're a kind of a puzzle—a riddle, stranger," replied Zedekiah.

"Ye needn't let on now, lank-legs," replied the desperado; "I'm Ma Molock, sar, the wolf-herder, and ar'n't to be fooled with, I'd haw' ye know."

"Mat Molock, the wolf," said Dee, stroking his long thin whiskers reflectively.

"Yes, I ar, and I'm arter provision for my pets," replied the wolf herder.

"Swar, Mr. Molehill, I've no pervision to spare ye."

"You're durned thick headed, 'less ye are jest foolin', and if ye are, ye'd better be keeful. I'm arter a chap what called here an hour or two ago. He killed one of my Ingins friends to-day, and has got to answer for the crime."

"You don't say, Mattie!" exclaimed Dee, elevating his hands in surprise.

"I do say," retorted the desperado, "and if ye don't trot that chap out here, and that purty quick, too, I'll be yer everlastin' sickness, I'll take down yer roost here—I'll rub ye outen—"

"Hold on, stranger, hold on for the Lord's sake! Be keeful, and do talk like ye war only one man. I never could face a dozen men all 'corporated into one. Don't tamper with me for fear you raise my Ebenezer. I'm not used to bein' insulted in my own house. I'm a quiet, inoffensive young man, but once riled up I expect all Nevada couldn't stop me. Thar is a chap here, mister; he's aloft in bed, enjoyin' of the refreshin' slumber of youth, and dreamin' of scalps, bears and his sweet heart. And I'm of the solemn opinion, stranger, that he's a howlin' young avalanche on the muscle. I'm of the opinion he'd go through yer corporosity as easy as a chunk of lead ejected from a ten-pound cannonade—jest scrape-rake-scoop ye right off into eternity."

"You can tell him to git up and step down, for I tell you he's got to come."

"I can do that, ole boss," replied Dee, "but I don't want to see you hurt—killed! It'll be wasteful of raw material—a pity to cut you off in the bloom of a vigorous manhood. I tell you, Mattygorda Molock, you're in no condition to fight a young bear—a tornado—an attack of deadly cholera."

"I'm not alone," replied the wolf-herder.

"Oh, you bein' be you?"

Idaho Tom heard the man's reply with a feeling akin to terror. He rose to his feet, and while debating with himself what to do, he discovered a ray of light streaming into the loft through a hole under the edge of the roof. He knew at once that it came from the outside of the building, and placing his eyes to the opening, beheld a sight that would have paralyzed a less brave heart with terror.

In the lurid glow of six or eight pine torches, he beheld as many stalwart forms drawn up in line before the cabin and disguised in most horrible-looking masks. And just as the youth had fairly got his eyes upon these ogreish figures, he heard Molock fairly howl:

"I want that boy, Idaho Tom, and I will have him, dead or alive!"

"Then you have no idea where that girl I saw belongs?"

"No more'n the man in the moon."

Tom made no reply, and for a moment there was a deep silence, broken only by the nasal song of the tea-kettle and the occasional snap of the fire.

"I'd give my interest in the lode to know who she is," Tom finally remarked.

"Even so," muttered Zedekiah, and shutting one eye, he aimed a torrent of tobacco-juice at a large red coal toppling on the end of a burning stick.

"I can't dismiss the thoughts of the girl from my mind."

"Shure ye wa'n't asleep and see'd the gal in a dream, are ye, Thomas?"

"Asleep—no; no more than I am this minute. I'd go my bottom dollar on that, Zedekiah."

"Quar, very quar indeed," and another drenching volley of tobacco-juice splattered among the hot embers.

Tom now noted a reticence in the conversation of his host which had not been manifested at first; and so the youth, as a matter of precaution, pressed him no further on points which he appeared to evade.

After a few minutes' further desultory talk, the trapper drew an old "bull's-eye" watch from his pocket, and consulting its hand on the face, said:

"Stranger—Thomas, it's ten o'clock, or very nigh it, I should think, judgin' by appearances here. T'at's my time to lay this little body down to rest. In fact, Tom, it ar'n't overly safe ad healthy to keep a life running in the shebang. Thar's many lopin' red-skins in these diggin's, and thar's no tellin' what designs they may have upon the place. If it be your wish to bunk here to-night, you will ascend that ladder, and in that corner of the cabin you'll find an arrangement that'd be soft to a wooden man to depose upon."

Tom took his rifle, and bidding his host good-night, ascended the ladder into the loft. He had no trouble in finding the "arrangement" spoken of, notwithstanding the darkness of the place. Without removing his clothes, the youth threw himself upon the couch, but not to sleep. He had a curiosity which he desired to gratify, and while he lay upon the rude bed, pondering over the events of the day, and waiting for some movement below, he suddenly heard a low, clicking sound like that made by a telegraphic battery.

At first he could not locate the noise, but upon closer listening he discovered that it originated in the room below.

Carefully Tom arose to a sitting posture and applied his eyes to a crack in the loft floor. But at this very instant the sound was discontinued.

He was in time, however, to see his host close the huge chest or box in the corner of the room below, heretofore mentioned, and resume his seat before the fire.

The youth kept his watch at the crack, and presently that mysterious clicking began again, and this time lasted for fully a minute. Tom had never heard such a noise before outside of a telegraph office, and he noticed that Zedekiah Dee smiled blandly and rubbed his hands with glee.

The young outlaw was in a quandary. He scarcely knew how to take the old trapper's movements, and while he was pondering over the matter, there came a thunderous rap on the door below, that caused an involuntary shudder to thrill through his whole body.

"Gosh almighty thunder!—that must be a young earthquake buttin' against that door," exclaimed Zedekiah Dee, starting to his feet.

"Who in the 'arnal nation be you out thar? Bring in yer corporosity."

The door opened and the huge, burly form of a white man stepped across the threshold, and pausing, stared insolently about the room. His bearded face, his savage garb, weapon-laden girdle, and whole bearing, bespoke, in plain language, the desperado.

"Eh, slid out, has he?" the man asked, fixing a pair of wolfish eyes upon the trapper.

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THE OLD VINE SWING.

BY JOHN WHITSON.

The soft-winged zephyr and gentle breeze
Are toying still with the oaken trees;
And the earth is checked with bars of red
That sift through the foliage overhead.
While the voice of nature subdued and low,
And the hurrying sound of the river's flow,
Float out like the rush of an angel's wing,
And hover above the old vine swing.

The tendrils trail over its creaking form,
And anchor it safe from the mountain storm,
While the wild flowers spring like a blessed
hoon
And wrap its form in a bright festoon;
The white clouds float over it one by one,
To hang like silver veils over the sun;
While the old rus-wins, that burden the spring
Linger lovingly around the old vine swing.

The cricket chirps forth from the fallen tree,
The flowers are sought by the busy bee;
The partridge drums in the woodland drear,
And the quail pipes forth from the pastures near;
Still wearily back and forth some head
It swings the length of its festooned chain,
While sweet-voiced warblers with brilliant wing,
Are duttering over the old vine swing.

Now it sways about in the autumn blast,
A mournful relic of days long past;
A sad memento of fond hopes dead,
Of bright flowers withered and visions fled;
Of loved forms moldering in the tomb,
Of faces veiled in eternity's gloom;
Of strong loves blasted; each poisoned sting,
That pierced the heart beneath the old vine swing.

And the night comes down with its shadows dank,
And the grass that springs in the pathway rank,
Is proudly flaunting its noxious head,
O'er the spot whence the scenes of youth have
fled;
And the joys and sorrows that thronged the
broad
Have faded like light from the distant west:
All, all have fled, no familiar thing,
But the swaying form of the old vine swing.

It is ever thus in this world below,
That peace drifts off like the tidal flow;
That sadness presses the heavy heart,
And memory lashes with poisoned dart;
While the bird of hope leaves the soul and flies
To a fairer country and brighter skies;
And a ghoul-like bird with its ebony wing,
Shades the gloomy heart and the spectral swing.

Love in a Maze:

THE DEBUTANTE'S DISENCHANTMENT.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLET.

AUTHOR OF "ALIDA BARRETT, THE SEWING-GIRL," "MADELINE'S MARRIAGE," ETC.

CHAPTER IX.

ELODIE'S RESOLUTION.

ELODIE enjoyed her lessons at the humble home of Olive Weston, because she was always praised when her efforts deserved it, and so gently told of mistakes that she took the reproof almost as praise.

She had made rapid progress, and practiced so diligently that her teacher not only commended her, but expressed surprise at her ardor in the pursuit. It was so unlike the listless indifference of other young ladies.

"But they study music only as a parlor accomplishment," responded the girl, "while I mean to make it a life pursuit."

Olive did not quite understand her.

"A profession, you know."

"I did not know that! Do you intend being a professional singer?"

"Certainly."

"Your friends have no idea of it; have they?"

"Perhaps not; but I have always wanted to sing in public. The opera is my world."

"The opera! Do you mean to go on the stage?"

"I tell you in confidence, Miss Weston, I do. I love it; I pine for it! I have no relations to keep me from doing as I please."

"But there is no need. You will be independent in fortune, I am told."

"Then I can afford to indulge my tastes. I shall be miserable if I do not have my way."

"But, Elodie, you are very young, and hardly a judge yet of what is best for your future."

"If I am young, I can see what kind of life would make me wretched. Such a one as Miss Seaford's for instance; nothing but a series of flirtations."

"You must not talk so, Elodie."

"I heard some one call her the most accomplished flirt in the city. And poor Mr. Wyndham, who worships her—"

"Hush! I will not hear any scandal!"

"I was only telling you how I should hate to be a society belle, with butterflies around me. I want the bright, intense life of an artist."

"Ah, child, there is many a thorn in the artist's rose-wreath."

"I want to dress, and sing, and act some grand part! To feel myself in a new, glorious world; to thrill crowds with my voice; to have bouquets thrown to me, in the midst of tumultuous applause!"

"Poor Elodie! I can see that you dwell on the vain side of the dream! You must not indulge such fancies. You have a vast deal to learn, and many errors to unlearn, before you could even begin a professional life."

"I know all the difficulties; but I do not despair of conquering them. Have I not improved since I took lessons?"

"Very much, indeed!"

"I will go on improving. And when you turn me off as finished, so far as you can finish me, I will have mastered—the very best; and if necessary, I shall go to Paris or Italy, and study there!"

"Again I say, do not indulge fancies that may never be realized."

"Why not, if I have the means to indulge them, and am determined on it?"

"After more conversation of this kind, Olive rose and opened the folding doors connecting the two little parlors."

There was a bright little fire, and in its glow an easy-chair drawn up beside a stand covered with embroidered cloth, on which stood a vase full of fresh flowers.

An elderly lady sat reading the Holy Scriptures; the volume resting on the stand.

She wore a loose robe of silver-gray cashmere, tied in front with white ribbons, and a cap of soft mull, prettily embroidered, with a white rosette and bow at the side.

"Mamma, dearest," said the soft voice of her daughter, "you have often taken pleasure in hearing Elodie sing and play, and wondered at her marvelous progress. Hear now what she says about her own future, and give her your advice."

Elodie was not afraid of the sweet old lady, and did not hesitate at repeating what she had said.

"Ah, my child, you will think differently of all this when two or three years more have rolled over your head!"

The girl protested as before.

"People who cling to such dreams, in their inexperience, remind me of Sydney Brill's elopement," remarked Mrs. Weston, smiling.

"Tell me about that."

"Sydney was a romantic young gentleman, and fancied himself in love with a young lady whose father had refused his consent to the match. The daughter was an invalid, but an heiress, and Sydney had always seen her in an easy chair, as you see me now, Elodie—or in a carriage, driving out with her father. He was charmed with her face as well as her fortune, and at length persuaded her to elope with him."

"I thought he would do that!"

"Her maid helped her into the carriage late one evening, and followed her. Sydney sat on the front seat. His attention was drawn to a curious knocking at regular intervals, on the bottom of the vehicle. He wondered several times if any part of it had given way. At last he put his head out to bid the driver stop, that he might see what was broken. His lady-love clasped his arm, and begged him not to do it. By degrees she confessed the truth. She had lost a leg some years before by a fall from her horse, and it was her woin in memory that kept up the knocking."

Elodie laughed.

"As the day dawned, and they drew near the station, the carriage gave a lurch in going over some obstacle in the road, and was over set. The lady was not injured, but the shock had displaced one of her eyes—a glass one—and before she could conceal her face by drawing her veil, Sydney saw that his bride-elect was minus an eye as well as a leg."

"Poor fellow! I pity him, indeed!"

"They had to stop at the nearest inn, as the carriage needed some repairs. The maid assisted her mistress into the parlor, and Sydney heard the latter say, as she stumped to the mirror:

"How hideous a night's travel makes one look!"

"How penitent he must have been for his rashness!"

"Just then a carriage drove up, and a gentleman entered the parlor of the inn. It was the young lady's father."

"Come to take her home?"

"By no means. He said to young Brill:

"A year since, I forbade your suit to my daughter—Sydney answered, eagerly: 'I know it, sir; I beg your pardon; and sooner than offend you, I am now prepared to give her up.'"

"Oh, what did she say?"

"The young lady gave a little shriek, and went into hysterics. The father responded:

"No—Mr. Brill, I do not now demand such a sacrifice of you. I thought you sought my child for her expectations of fortune. She had indeed great expectations from her aunt, Mrs. Hylton; but these are brought to naught by the second marriage of her aunt and the birth of an heir to her property. My daughter has no prospects of wealth; nothing but her loveliness and her excellence of character. You love her faithfully; you have proved that love by tempting her to an act of disobedience which, under the circumstances, I freely pardon. My blessing vests upon your union; my house and heart are open to you!"

"Oh, Mrs. Weston! What did the young man do?"

"What could he do? The father so indulgent! yet Sydney knew he had only his pension as a retired colonel, that ceased at his death; and the young lady looking at him with tender eyes—one of which he knew to be false. He began muttering something about not being able to provide for her luxuries to which she had been used; and not venturing to ask her to share his poverty, etc."

"But she protested, with tears in her one eye, that she would gladly live with him in a cottage, or a hovel; and limping across the room, she threw herself into his arms. The father lifted his hands in benediction. So Sydney was compelled to marry her."

"To marry her! What a take in!"

"She led him a terrible life; for she had a temper; if she lacked a leg and an eye. At the end of two years they separated. She had involved poor Sydney deeply in debt by her extravagance; and he gave up to her all he had, and went to the Mexican war."

"To be killed there, I suppose?"

"I do not know; I never heard of him afterward. But to the moral of this true story, my dear child: In the blind pursuit of a phantasy, you are like the young man in love with a girl whose beauty was a deception. If you should succeed in grasping the object of your desires, you might find yourself disappointed, as he did, on the discovery of the truth."

"It did not appear that the judicious advice of either mother or daughter had any effect in changing the bent of the pupil's determination."

CHAPTER X.

A DISCOVERY.

ON her return home, Elodie went into the library. She was accustomed to spend hours in the curtained recess at the end, reading her favorite romances, when she had finished her practicing.

She usually let down the lace or damask curtains, and ensconced herself in a large cushioned leather chair. She was soon buried in the autobiography of a French vocalist, in whose career she was trying to trace a resemblance to her own.

It might have been an hour afterward, when Wyndham and his sister came in. They seemed to have been engaged in some light conversation; for the young man was laughing and Emily was pressing him to tell her something.

"There is a secret, I know," she said, "between you and Ruhama, that you have been hiding from me; and you are to play out some part of the drama this evening. Suppose I guess it?"

"Suppose you try?"

"I will, then. You are engaged to be married."

"Oh, you are far wide of the mark!"

"I made sure you were proposing to Ruhama at the ball. What else were you two talking about so long?"

"About you, sister mine."

"We were planning a queer surprise for you."

"Exactly; to present me with a sister in my friend."

"Don't let your thoughts stray that way. Nothing of the kind is likely to take place."

"Wyndham, I have long seen that you love Ruhama."

"Then you have seen what does not exist."

"No; you do surprise me."

"In time past, I really have thought of her as my future wife; I confess that much. But Miss Seaford is too great a flirt to make a grave man like me happy."

Elodie let the book slide from her lap as she listened, with parted lips and startled eyes.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Emily. "She has a true and noble heart."

"A heart never awakened, then. I once nearly made her a declaration."

"Ah!"

"And she laughed at me! She scorned my passion; she begged me not to make myself ridiculous for her sake, for she should certainly reject me. That was after she had kept me dangling for months, in a desperate flirtation."

"Oh, Wyndham! I am sure she likes you."

"I fancied, afterward, that she thought better of my pretensions, and wanted me to make love to her again. But the spell was broken!"

"You love her still?"

"I cannot say that I do. I admire her certainly."

"Everybody admires her."

"And she has a smile for every one. What a circle she gathers round her at every party!"

"It is a rare gift—that of enchanting people as she does."

"She is beautiful, a reputed heiress, and a coquette."

"Is the last character to be admired?"

"Don't you know that? Coquetry sets off a girl's charms, and makes her sparkle like a fountain in the sun. But it is a dangerous accomplishment."

"I should think so!"

"A slight dash of it is like *sauce piquante*; it flavors the delicacies offered. But when it makes light of a serious passion it goes too far. It disenchantment me, forever."

"Brother, I will wager that you go back to the brilliant girl yet."

"I should be very much surprised to see myself at her feet. But she is a charming friend. By the way, did she take Elodie to drive with her this afternoon?"

"No, the child went to Olive for her lesson, and stayed late. Do you want to see her?"

"Not now. I am in some trouble on her account."

"What?"

"One of the papers her aunt thought was in the yellow box, one of those she gave me, is missing."

"A paper—is it of importance?"

"It is her mother's marriage-certificate."

"That is of consequence, now!"

"So much, that without it, unless I can prove the marriage of her parents, she is likely to lose her property."

"That would be very hard; and as bad, or worse, to lose caste and be excluded from society, when she is fitted to enter it. You know she could not go out with us if people knew there was a shadow on her birth."

"People are very censorious," remarked young Blount, musingly.

"It is natural and proper. I should not like to have her story known to any one."

"Poor child! hers has been a sad experience; and to lose her rightful inheritance would be a cruel blow. I have been making diligent inquiries. I bribed Silas—Mr. Rashleigh's former servant—to search the house for the missing paper; and I have tried to find the clergyman or the witnesses to the marriage. That, I am convinced, is utterly hopeless."

"How will she lose her fortune?"

"Her granduncle's will left the money to Charles Sierra and his lawful issue; in default of that, to the children of Rashleigh, who is a distant cousin."

"I thought it was her mother's property."

"Oh, no; in that case, she could inherit; an illegitimate child can inherit from the mother, though not from the father."

"I see. But how is it that she has been so long in possession?"

"The trustees of the property made no special inquiries; requiring only proof of identity. And Bennet Rashleigh's only son, by his first marriage, being in the asylum for imbeciles, as long as the girl was in his house he made no stir about it."

"He will do so, now?"

"I was served with notice to-day that he means to claim the property, in right of his son."

"Poor Elodie! But you will not give up her rights?"

"Not while I have an inch of ground to stand upon! But if I cannot prove the marriage, I fear resistance will be useless."

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"Poor Elodie! But you will not give up her rights?"

"Because I want you to know and to like our distinguished stranger."

"I told you I did not wish to meet him," said Emily, petulantly.

"But he is dying to be introduced to you—and his ardent wish balances yours. I throw my own inclination into the scale, and yours kicks the beam!"

"You are a faithless friend!"

"You will not say so, when you have had a conversation with our brilliant count. I am sure you will like him!"

"Ruhama, are you going to marry him?"

"I'll with a burst of merry laughter. 'Ask him that question, and he will answer it, I throw, to your satisfaction.'"

"Then it is so. Well—I must wish you all happiness, dear. But I once hoped it would be otherwise."

She was about to put her arms around Ruhama's neck; but the lively girl seized both her wrists and held them, while she looked laughingly into her eyes.

"Now, you perverse creature! what are you taking into your head? I think of marrying the count! You will laugh at the idea, as I do, before you are three hours older!"

"You are pleased to be mysterious, and I cannot fathom you. Wyndham has been playing at it too. Well, I will bide your time for enlightenment."

"Good girl! Now, are you dressed? Sit down here, and listen to me. Shall I tell you first a secret about myself, or give you a surprise?"

"Tell me about yourself; for, if I am not mistaken, that will be the surprise."

"Don't be too sure! Well—papa seems to have found a match for me!"

"Your papa? I thought you—"

"Would find one for myself, you mean! I am such a coquette, it is difficult to decide among numerous suitors. So an older head has weighed the matter, and decided the question."

"Who is it?"

"You would never guess. What think you of General Marsh?"

THE SATURDAY JOURNAL

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Buffalo Bill's Best Story,
SOON TO APPEAR IN, AND
WRITTEN EXPRESSLY FOR, THE SATURDAY JOURNAL:
DEADLY EYE.

The Mysterious Marksman,

at once plants the celebrated scout in the front rank of writers of Wild Western Romance. It is so fresh, vigorous and original—so full of the telling interest of personal adventure—so stamped with intimate knowledge of his characters and scenes—that the famous Prince of Hunters and Guides becomes also the

PRINCE OF STORY-TELLERS!

The scene is laid on ground over which Mr. Cody has tramped as hunter, and scouted as guide to emigrant-train and government troop; and his chief actors in the story's drama are the very persons he has known. Out of the thousand exciting and marvelous experiences of

His Own Wild and Astonishing Career he herein brings to the front a series of adventures and episodes of life in the verge of civilization which make a romance at once thrilling, exciting and captivating.

Sunshine Papers.

The Secret of a Sound.

HARK! Was that a scream rended the sultry summer stillness of the air?

Yes! there it is again; and another; and another; and the voice is that of a woman. Now they are stifled. Now the after-dinner quiet has fallen all about the house again. What could they have meant? Who could it have been? They sounded so near and yet the neighborhood was wrapped, now, in profoundest silence. No one is moving. The sunlight falls yellow and hot upon motionless trees, deserted streets, darkened houses. Next door, on one side, lives a clergyman and wife and son. It is as impossible that those cries of fear and pain—sounding of equal mental and physical torture—could have come from there, as that they could have come from our other neighbors, where live a young couple who seek no interests or happiness outside each other and their home. Across the wide avenue, away in the shadows of that fine old park, resides a stately widowed dame with her worthy daughter, famed for miles as a Lady Bountiful. Then we have only the house, where we rear to speculate regarding—cottages filled with the lower strata of the populace of our town. Naturally one would deem the shrieks came from here. Naturally, unless one has found, as we have, that brutality is sometimes in higher homes.

We learned to suspect first, have come to know by horrible confirmation at last, the secret of that voiced suffering. It seems such a perfect home, the one next door; so all sufficient to the young wife and husband, with his maid and man servant, its comforts and quiet. He sits in his easy-chair on the veranda reading books and the daily papers, cares for his pet dogs, supervises his business, keeps regular hours, and seldom leaves the house. She moves about her little household duties and is seldom seen. But after a time we get to know and like her, so kindly, and bright, and fond of Charlie. By and by the maid-servant is sent away. Then the little wife does all the work, and is brave, and merry, and laughs over her experiences in new duties and arts. For she was never taught to work. An only daughter of a prosperous widow—a petted darling—she was merely instructed in the accomplishments of a convent education; and, from her convent, graduated to a place in the best society of an aristocratic village not many miles out from the metropolis.

It was a nine days' wonder when the news got abroad that the merry belle intended to marry the son of a man whose name is known among depraved classes of society from Maine to Texas. To be sure the man was rich; moreover, so was Charlie, and gentlemanly. And as Charlie was in nowise responsible for his father's business, concerned with it, nor countenanced it, and was heartily ashamed of the parental notoriety, she saw no reason why he should not be esteemed according to his own merits, loved him, and married him. And he seems contented with his home, cares for nothing outside of it, and is dotingly fond of his wife! Oh! so fond of her! One's ideas of nineteenth century men really grow elevated through knowing him! We commence to think Love's young dream certainly is sweet, and that marital affection is not merely a myth of the past!

First Charlie takes this girl, who has thought all her sacrifices light for love of him, among strangers. Well, that is nothing so long as they have each other. Eventually the entire drudgery of the household devolves upon her; she seldom gets away for a day's visit home, seldom goes out of doors, never sits upon the veranda nor at the front windows; has few clothes—none that he purchases—and does not know what it is to take a five-minute walk in the open air. Perhaps Charlie's finances are responsible mostly for this! Not at all; Charlie is well-to-do. Oh! no! Charlie's love is the divinity that shapes her life. If she goes out some other man might come near her, look upon her, speak of her. And is she not his? His as much as the blooded dogs he pampers? And if he chooses to exhibit them, why that is his pleasure; but he does not choose to exhibit her, so he keeps her confined with work, and no clothes, and flies in a passion if she goes near a street window. Twice she

walked to the shops of errands. Both times he watched her. The second time she met a gentleman friend of her mother's—shook hands with him and walked calmly on. Charlie met her at home in a rage, and—whipped her.

We read of Pat or Mike beating Bridget and Ann; but that would not be a proper and refined way of wording a respectable young American's method of expressing his love for his wife, would it? When Charlie finds his wife resting in a rocker at the front parlor window he makes heavy use of his hand; when once she ventured to spend an hour with a sick neighbor, who had a husband, he welcomed her return with—let us speak of it politely—a chastisement; and the screams that disturbed the summer afternoon were from Charlie's faithful little wife, who believes no one knows her husband's fiendish nature, and so fondly conceals his faults. She was sweeping the hall, and so stood chattering a moment, she so seldom sees a human creature to talk with, to the errand-boy from the near hotel. Her husband saw it, and dragged her in, and his blows evoked the cries that startled us from our warm dreamings.

And so the tragedy goes on. And this incarnated human shape of the demon jealousy avers that he loves the victim he has allured to so horrible a doom. Love! What a pollution of the word to use the syllabication of a pure, tender, ardent, sacred emotion as a synonym for a base, foul, fiendish passion! As if love and jealousy had any ground in common! Love delights to honor, to glorify, to make sacrifices. Love would fain give all and ask nothing. Love stakes faith, and truth, and purity, and all it holds dear and sacred, upon a word—a glance. Jealousy tortures, degrades, and kills. Jealousy demands a brutish submission of every physical, mental and spiritual faculty, and rewards such sacrifices with contemptuous blows and dastardly distrust. Jealousy flings "trifles, light as air, confessions strong as proofs of Holy Writ," and scoffs at any inherent or cultivated good, and derides all truth and virtue. Love is heavenly and jealousy hellish; and yet there are men and women who forget "jealousy is a monster, begot upon itself, born on itself," and call it proof of love, and pride themselves upon having a piece of it in their natures; God help them!

Our heart bleeds for Charlie's wife, because we are near her, and shudderingly know the suffering she endures, and how bravely she holds to her youthful faith in him. But, oh! who, who can count the many hearts that are breaking, the sins and cruelties that are steeping lives in shame and crime, through the workings of that same demon that rules the senses and hands of our young neighbor?

Men and women, you who dream of uniting your lives in a bond not lightly dissoluble and affecting the welfare of many mortals yet unborn, see to it that you purge your natures of even one drop of that demoniac passion which is poison to love, and is "Cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame."

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

WE are pained to hear of the recent death of our quondam contributor, Lettie Artley Irons, whose pertinent essays, sweet home romances and the serial "Mad Nation" (which appeared under a *nom de plume*) attest a talent of no common order. She was an invalid, and often wrote on a bed of pain, and for the last few years of her life, as we learn, was a terrible sufferer, so that death, usually so terrible to the young, was a great boon. "Whom the gods love die young." May her memory be forever green with those who knew her, and those who knew her not will pay the sweet tribute of sympathy and regret. Rest, sweet spirit.

A NEW SOCIETY.

SINCE we have societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, why can't we have one for the prevention of cruelty to human beings? I am sure we need one badly enough and it is high time one was formed. You can't think in how many ways people are cruelly treated, and I'm about to enlighten you concerning the matter.

It is cruelty of people to tell you—when you are down in the world—that it has been your own fault, that it serves you right and you should have been more prudent and careful, that they regret matters have eventuated as they have done but you should have known what to expect. They have made their way in the world and you should be left to do the same. A person cannot expect another to help him out of the ditch into which he has voluntarily flung himself. That is their idea of the matter. What could comfort that is, how charitable, how kind, how Christian-like! Yes, and what downright cruelty!

It is cruel of editors to harrow up the minds of sensitive readers by giving the fullest items of murder cases, shocking accidents, fearful fires and heartrending famines. It is pandering too much to a sickly, morbid, sensational appetite and is productive of no good whatever. It is done to make the paper pay, but it seems to me it could be made to pay as well by using other means. The glaring headlines are enough to frighten any one. It is injurious to the child and of no earthly benefit to the adult. If the "evil" is not corrected the time will come when we shall want the press to fill their papers with nothing else but horrors. It may all seem very energetic on the part of the editors to try and gain all the particulars, but, to me, it seems something akin to cruelty to thrust these matters which might be left unprinted in the very faces of those who are really shocked by the recital.

Here is a slip copied from a paper: "Mrs. William E. Lynch, of Brooklyn, had the doctor prescribe opium powders for her, and magnesia powders for her baby. She gave the opium powders to the child and is short one baby." I presume the paragraphist thought himself remarkably witty, but it strikes me downright cruelly was mixed with it. Don't you suppose that mother felt the mistake she had made keenly enough without having such paragraphs written about it? It was a shallow brain and the hand of a trifler which conceived and penned that item. He makes another individual our society should look after. His comes under the head of cruel beings.

The man who started the fearful hoax of the burning of a Chicago theater has much to answer for. You may remember he even gave the names of those who perished in the flames. One man's name was among them. When his wife and mother read that apparently truthful report, what was the result? One of those women died and the other is hopelessly maniac. "It was only a funny hoax," people said. "Where did the fun lie?" Are death and madness so very funny? If I had written the article, and seen the result, I would have felt myself to be a murderer. Renorse would have killed me in less than a week's time. Is there no punishment for the perpetrator of so

wicked a falsehood. Maybe you think his own guilty conscience will be his greatest punishment. Maybe I think he hasn't any such article about him as a conscience. It seems to me that no one with any conscience could be guilty of such a cruel imposture. If he isn't a case for our society to consider, who is, pray tell me!

Cruel are they who cast aspersions on your character—not exactly saying, in so many words, that you are not a fit person to associate with but leaving others to infer that such was just what they meant. Cruel are they who strive to breed mischief between man and wife—to advise neither to give in to the weak points of the other—to make mountains out of molehills, and tattle what this husband says of his wife and what that wife says about her husband, pretending to be a friend to each party, and yet a foe to both. To make enemies of those who have been lifelong friends—of quenching them—to advise recourse to the divorce court instead of settling disputes by loving words and generous forgiveness: this surely is cruelty refined. Cruel are they who will show no mercy to an enemy, a debtor or one who does them wrong. Many and many a sin are we guilty of because we do not cover them with charity. Our society is needed, and I believe would be a success. Never you fear but we should have plenty of objects to work for; we would have our hands full. But—I fear that I shall not live to see the society for the prevention of cruelty to human beings.

EVE LAWLESS.

Foolsap Papers.

My Garden This Year.

My garden this year is in a very advanced state of forwardness, and is going ahead as fast as its progress will allow it to proceed.

The pea-vines are exceedingly high, and I was led to think that by this time we would have a nice mess, but on pulling up a vine to-day I found there wasn't any pods on the roots yet, and yet they told me they were remarkably early in getting up in their little beds.

My cucumbers are coming along nicely, but they are still green. It will be a long time before they are ripe, I fear, but I have taken the leaves off the vines so the sun can have a full sweep at them and ripen them as quickly as possible.

My radishes are up pretty far, but as yet they haven't blossomed, and of course there are no little radishes on the vines. It seems a long while to wait for radishes. The roots are fine and large, and I would try them but I don't want to destroy the stalks for they may bear yet, if it is late.

The weeds have almost entire possession of the garden, although I hoed it only four weeks ago. My wife suggests that we eat the weeds and let the vegetables go.

Nobody fully knows how much comfort there is in having a garden unless they have one themselves. It is one of the most exhilarating things in the world to get up early in the morning while the dew is yet upon the leaves and grass, and go out into the garden and pull up two or three weeds, while the early birds are singing, the vegetables springing, and—the breakfast-bell ringing! A weed or two pulled up every morning in the course of a season amounts to a good deal more than you would imagine.

And then how inspiring it is to go out in the garden in the cool of the evening with your hoe in your hand and talk to your neighbor across the fence! I do enjoy agricultural life, to a great extent.

I have not poled my water-melon vines yet, but shall as soon as I get the poles.

I am fonder of acorns than most usually are, and have planted a row clear across the lot, next to the beans. They are up, and if the weather is favorable my neighbor says I will have acorns in a month or six weeks to sell.

My chestnuts are also up about an inch, and I have every reason to expect a full and early crop.

I have corn up some several inches, but I pulled a stalk of it up to-day and found only one grain attached to it, and that looked very much like the one I planted. I looked for at least a small ear at the root. I fear I didn't plant the right kind of corn to produce well.

I don't know. I ought to be satisfied with the course of nature, but it does really seem to me that I would be glad if some of the grass that is in my garden was in the front yard.

My wife and I had a long squabble about the way we should put in the little onions, but I held my way in spite of all, and put the wrong ends down. The consequence was, after going down some ways in search of daylight and atmosphere, the onions turned around and shot up, and every onion-stem is shaped like a hook, but it doesn't improve the scent or destroy the strength of that aromatic fruit, by any means; they are rather stronger on account of the crook than straight ones.

The lettuce I drilled came up in due time, but after cultivating it for some time I was told that it was timothy seed I had planted, and then I thought it was hardly worth while to cultivate it any longer.

There is certainly something inspiring for a man to walk out into his well-ordered garden, tramping down vegetables at every step or two, and see the plants growing up from the seed which his hands have sown. It looks like they grew at his command; his self-glorification, though, when he looks at the weeds.

I have taken the hoe several times to cut down every weed in the yard, but if I had done so where would moralists get an illustration of the weed, Vice, growing up by the side of the vegetable, Virtue? That is one of the many reasons why I haven't a weedless garden.

My potatoes didn't come up well at all, from the fact that I must have planted a good many blind ones, and they couldn't see their way out. The next time I plant potatoes I shall make a hole running down to them, so they can come right up. About the only things that grow on these vines so far are potato-bugs; there seems to be no end to them except to those which I kill.

I find that it is very expensive to the muscles and gives a man a keen appetite to go out into your garden in the forenoon with a sharp hoe and set a little nigger to work with it; I can hardly wait for dinner, and then again I don't somehow feel tired after that exertion.

The chickens helping me to scratch around the garden would pay if so many of the vegetables didn't come up. If I ever make a garden again, I think I shall train a gang of good stout chickens for that work, and live at my ease. Patent applied for.

A very fine mess of greens was the first of vegetables we had this year out of our garden, and there is plenty left—of dandelions. The question is asked: "Does gardening pay?" Well, it paid the man who spaded mine. WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Topics of the Time.

The "Big Papers of New York and other great cities are not financial successes. They give too much for the money. In the race for popularity they carry too much sail, and will have to retrench or run ashore. In a good paper it is not so much the quantity as quality of matter that really tells. These big sheets are daily loaded with redundant and irrelevant writing, which a thorough revision would have reduced 50 per cent. in volume, and thereby have made the paper 50 per cent. more effective. A little more work and a great deal less words are what are wanted in the 'triple sheets.'"

Wondering what becomes of all the lead pencils in use in the world. In one week of last month a firm near this city received orders for 445 miles of lead pencils. To make these only 83,000 feet of cedar timber are required, and after they are made they will load six freight cars. A certain editor, who is nothing if not a philosopher, says: "This immense consumption of lead pencils is doubtless caused by the attempts of women to sharpen them with a pair of scissors or a dull case-knife. Persons who have witnessed these efforts need no longer wonder at the demand." He must have been a scissors and knife-grinder, in early life, to know so much about it.

Egypt has two enlightening rulers who desire to put that country on the civilized track; they are the Khedive himself and his Minister of Foreign Affairs. They hold that, while the doctrine of "Egypt for the Egyptians" is a sound one, still, to run the machine on that system, a little more foreign talent and skill are needed. The old fogies growl at this, of course, but the old fogies in Egypt, where the one man rule is supreme, are only kept for ornament. The Khedive is shrewd and sagacious enough to put Americans in position throughout all departments of his government, from nurses and directors to major generals. Egypt will progress.

A boy tried his first pipe the other day. When his father came home to dinner, he found him braced against a barrel, with his legs spread apart, his hands and lower jaw drooping listlessly, and a deathly pallor overspreading his face.

"What is the matter with you?" inquired the anxious parent. "My teacher is sick," gasped the boy. "Well, you mustn't feel so badly about it, Tommy," said the father, kindly. "She will get well again, without a doubt." And then, stepping into the house, he observed to his wife that that was the most sympathetic boy he ever saw. Good papa! That boy will be calling him "gov'nor" before he is a year older, and asking for an increase of pocket-money.

The trade in tissue paper patterns is enormous. One house recently ordered 5,000 reams of paper and two millions of envelopes in which to place the patterns. These patterns are so perfect that dresses for costume parties are easily made, and are fast becoming popular. These patterns are a real boon to the mother of a family living far from any village or settlement. Every garment worn by men, women or children can be made from them; they are noted at the places to join them; the number of yards for each garment and its trimming is faithfully given, ingenuity is fostered, comfort is promoted, and, in fine, we are inclined to class paper patterns among the great inventions of the age. They are as much signs of our advancing civilization as the rapidly-growing debts of our cities.

Of the ex-Emperor Ferdinand, of Austria—whose recent death made not a ripple on the political or social sea—we are told that he kept after his abdication the family estate and the large private fortune left to him by the Emperor Franz Joseph. Owing to his retired mode of life the fortune left by him has been considerably increased. The family estate goes to Archduke Franz Karl, the present emperor's father, as the next in succession of the reigning branch of that family. The private fortune has been disposed of, and will, which had been made years ago, and according to which the bulk of it goes to the present Emperor Francis, who is in reality a wise and efficient sovereign. If Ferdinand was not a fool he was only one story higher, so far as common sense was concerned.

New England is just now infested with tramp-such fellows as eat at the free soup-houses and sleep at the police stations in the cities during the winter. They will not work when the chance is offered. In several places the authorities set them at work sweeping the streets in payment for food and lodgings, and the result is a "ridance of vagrants." If a "general movement along the line" could be made against these strolling vagabond men and women, all the country would be rid of a great nuisance and incentive to pauperism. An able-bodied "tramp" has no more right to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" than a menagerie has to let loose its wild beasts to graze on the commons. A professional "tramp" ought to be an impossibility in this land of workers.

Those persons who began to eat large quantities of fish a few years ago, and have kept up the practice ever since without having experienced the desired increase of intellectual capacity, may thank the New Orleans *Republican* for this explanation: "Unless a man has brains, it is useless for him to eat brain food. It has never been claimed for fish that it creates the brain strength." This is discouraging, and the fellow who eat a whale must go into mourning as did the deacon who wound up regularly, every night at bedtime, for ten years, his standard clock, and at the end of that time discovered it was an eight-day time-piece. Fish may cease to be popular as food for human brains, but its glory has not all departed, for, if the Long Island farmers are not great liars, it's a glorious top-dressing for weak soils.

The Shah, while at a London ball, said to the perspiring Prince of Wales, "Why do you not employ servants to dance for you?" The London correspondent of the Cincinnati *Commercial* surmises that dancing will actually cease ere long, as a few mincing steps are all a fashionably-dressed woman can possibly take, and a young lady was recently heard to say, with a sigh, "What with being tied around above, and the round below, I have not had a good square sit down for three months." When a large ball is given there is an apology for dancing, which ends in music and talk, and admiring each other's dresses; and so dancing bids fair to become not "just the thing, you know," among the city bred. But to the hearty, happy, sensible country lads and lassies the cotillion, the lancers, the contra dance and dear old Virginia reel will ever be a source of delight. Long live the country lads and lassies, for their vigor must supplant the effete city progeny.

Who originates the fashions? They are not always the caprice of artists like Worth, the Paris-milliner, nor of the gay women who make Paris only too noted. It appears from a letter of a Paris correspondent that fewer fashions owe their origin to inspiration than to consciousness of a defect and an attempt to hide it, or in the desire of a reigning or a rising *belle* to rush a rival.

The fashions of crinolines in Spain, and a Spanish queen first wore hoops to dissimulate unequal hips. A Venus of the Boulevards, who committed suicide by throwing herself over a balcony a few years ago, revived the high-heeled shoes which Louis Quatorze originally brought into fashion to appear taller than the King of Spain at the meeting in the Isle of Pheasants. A lady who derives prestige from rank, fortune, and striking beauty, scalded her arm three winters back. An ugly mark bore witness to the accident. She thought of wearing to conceal it those long-armed gloves, which, out of mercy to the plebeian wives of Napoleon's marshals and generals, the Empress Josephine adopted. The lads slanting down over the eyebrows were the result of a lady of exalted rank losing her front hair. Queen Elizabeth's neck was yellow and thin, and hence the "stiff muslin mane." The double val of white and black tulle was contrived by a "Parliamentary woman" with a bad complexion.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in advance. No MSS. preserved for future consideration. Unavailable MSS. promptly returned only where stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MS." MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MS. as "copy"; third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. The Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, tearing off each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its folio or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unsuitable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

We file for use "Never," "August," "Hot Weather Advice," "The Court-plaster," "A Young Girl's Face," "The Belle's Reprieve," "A Taste of Sorrel," "The Lady of the Black Cap," "Prince Big Foot."

We cannot use "Only for Fun," "Among the Pawnees," "The Loner's Inheritance," "An Eye for the Main Chance," "Mrs. Potts Gives a Soiree," "The Piano Lesson," "A Brown Bear's Nest," "Old Rocks," "Smiling and Smiling," "The Old Boy."

BARNEY G. Buffalo Bill is doing his best work for the SATURDAY JOURNAL.

Mrs. P. G. E. We see no impropriety in your going to any summer resort alone.

OLD MORTALITY. Bryant, the poet, is over 80 years of age, yet he walks and rides, and is as vigorous as a young man.

MURKIN BOY. We know of no "Black Hills Expedition of tourists and explorers."

AGNES STRONG. Straw flats are the style for the croquet ground, the country and seaside.

ZENDAVESTA. The Patriarchs lived to great ages. Sarah bore Isaac when she was 90, and so on.

M. P. H. Both Grant and Sheridan are Ohioans—true Buckeyes—by birth and schooling.

E. W. P. "Rocky Mountain Rob" is the first of the Dick Talbot series in the new twenty-cent series, just issued by Overland Publications.

G. G. HOPKIN. Mrs. Fleming's "Dark Secret" is published complete in Beadle and Adams' new twenty-five cent volume. All book and newsdealers will sell them, or will send them by mail.

CHAS. W. D. "Mad Dan" commenced in No. 150; "Dakota Dan," No. 240; "Bowie-knife Ben," No. 234; "Hawkeye Harry," No. 116; "Dark Secret," No. 87; "Red Coyote" was published as a Dimie Novel.

STUDENT-REPORTER. The expressions rose up, woke up, arise up, are in use, but are not "good English," being tautologous forms, i. e., duplicating ideas. Omit the words *up* and *arise*, and the meaning is fully conveyed. Hence, you are right and the professor is wrong.

THREE IN ONE. The book you want is that issued by a Boston publisher under the title of "Three in One: How to Reach Them." It is a beautifully illustrated, crown 8vo. of 350 pages, and gives information about all the "Summer Resorts" in the United States.

ARTHUR W. Carrara marble is perfectly pure, white and of fine texture—hence is chosen for the best statuary, marbles, etc. The quarries are at Carrara, in Italy. Carrara marble is now being worked in that place, employing over 4,000 men. The marble goes all over the world, chiefly in blocks of all sizes.

W. E. P. "Clerking" is, like all callings just now, greatly overstocked, but is, we believe, better paid than much other work. A good trade is preferable to the uncertainties of "store business"; but, if a good opening offers, no reason why you should not accept the position. You can, if so inclined, greatly improve your writing, and grammar you can study at home, and at a small cost.

HARRY B. Your "Pilgrims Progress" has no value but as a second-hand book. Over 250 different editions of this work have been printed. A New York *Herald* of 1874 has no special value, but a complete file of that paper will be exhibited at the Centennial. The address for information about the Great Exhibition is simply Corresponding Secretary, Centennial Exposition, Philadelphia.

MISS LAURA C. See your floral dictionary. The pansy is "pleasing thoughts of thee—from the French *pansee*." The pansy is a flower of the field, because it opens with the rising sun. It emblemizes contented innocence. The primrose means "Have faith in me." As it is up in the evening it typifies one who watches while others sleep, and is therefore, is very expressive. Answer it by a return of flowers expressing your sentiments or wishes.

SLIM JIM. You may eat too much. It is not the quantity one eats out the quality, which gives flesh. Use milk freely; bathe at least twice a week thoroughly in *legit* water, sleep on a hard surface daily at least two hours in some robust game or labor.

W. O. C. Horsman & Co., 100 William street, are dealers in the goods you want.

DANBY ALOE. Good advice, say again, writes only for the SATURDAY JOURNAL. Of a romance just received from him, he says: "If your readers take the interest in perusing it that I have taken in writing it, I know they will pronounce it the best effort of my pen."

M. M. Cincinnati. Will examine the MS. referred to with pleasure, but, crowded as we are with good things, can give you no special encouragement. YOUR MANUSCRIPT. The war of Russia against France, England and Turkey occurred in 1854-55. The great battle of Alma was fought September 20th, 1854; that of Balaclava Oct. 25th; that of Inkermann Nov. 25th. Sebastopol was besieged during the summer of 1855, and after a terrific cannonade by the allies was abandoned by the Russians Sept. 11, 1855. The war, and peace was concluded January 10th, 1856.

MOSES DAVY. You are not alone in the ravages of out worms, but there is a remedy, as we know from our own experience. A table-spoonful of castor oil dissolved in a pint of water, and applied to any plant will drive away or kill out worms, will keep bugs from injuring vines, will kill borers in peach or apple trees, in case of worms and locusts, and other insects, and will at the same time invigorate all trees and plants to which it may be applied, and restore diseased trees to health.

J. FRANKLIN J. Philadelphia, asks: "Would you be so kind as to let me know, through your columns, a congratulatory in rhyme suitable to accompany a birthday gift from a gentleman to a young lady? What would be a suitable gift for a young man to give a lady friend?" The following might do:

This little gift I send, lady,
I pray thee, take it to-day
With kindest hopes and wishes sweet,
That future years be always gay;
And many birthdays, each more blest,
Be "white stars" in the sky of rest.
Consult, if possible, your knowledge of the lady's tastes, in selecting the gift; a music portfolio containing some of her own compositions, or a book of essays or poems, or a new novel, that you think she would appreciate; card-case—fan—portemanteau—album—opera-glasses—picture—perfumery—music box—glove—brooch—necklace—any of these, or a handsome basket of natural flowers—either would be a pretty and suitable gift.

LITTLE BRIGHT EYES writes: "I'm a young girl just beginning to go into society. I have bright eyes, and nice hair and complexion, and a mother who dresses me tastefully; but I've heard people insinuate and say that I am awkward, and I know plenty think so who do not express their thoughts. I'm tall and rather slim, and I want to appear and act gracefully; how can I accomplish it? If you are too slim eat plenty of vegetables, especially potatoes, butter, bread and sugar, and drink beer and milk. To acquire grace, train yourself into a thorough gymnast; attend a good dancing-school, and gymnastics. Turn your toes well out, stand and sit erect, and practice walking with a heavy weight suspended in each hand. Walk much, and do not be afraid to use all the power of your muscles, and practice thoroughly with dumb-bells, wands and Indian clubs. If you are patient and persevering you will be able to give a pleasing ease and grace of carriage and movement."

CELESTE MORRILL, Oakland, Cal., says: "While shopping with a friend she met a male acquaintance. The bow with which he acknowledged his introduction to her was that of a gentleman, and lifting his hat at parting, he said to my friend, 'Where are you going?' She mentioned an ice-cream saloon. He answered, 'Indeed! I'll see you there.' When we were nearly ready to leave he came in and engaged in conversation with the lady, and when we made a move to go, ordered the waiter to bring her check to him. Now it was my check, and in that case what should I have done, asked for it, tendered my personal part of the expenditure, or quietly allowed him to settle it? You were the company of his friend, and etiquette demanded the same attention to you, while with her, that he showed her. After making an appointment to meet her at the saloon, and doing so, the obligation to make himself responsible for her check was no more imperative than it was concerning yours. Therefore you should have "quietly allowed him to settle it."

Unanswered questions on hand will appear next week.

"AUGUST."

BY FRANK M. IMBRIE.

"Come listen to me, *ma chere*;
Since last sun-eyed August-time
I have waited for an answer
From those mocking lips of thine!
You remember well the bargain,
If I could prove that you
Were oftentimes a cunning pinner,
The reward should be my Rue.

"Do you forget, *ma chere*,
What we said, and when, and where?
The flowers seemed stabbed with sun-thrusts
As the earth seemed robbed of air;
A dead heat, intense, was grappling
With the toilers, man and beast;
The voluptuous fruit hung languid
Neath the sun-god's wanton feast.

"Then, as now, the river lilies—
Floating, waxen, bird-like things—
Nestled closer to the waters,
Bathing off their exhaled wings.
Low the willows to the rushes,
Bent and gossiped lazily,
As the sunset's trail stretched golden
Paths of light for Rue and me.

"Soon the rustling of his going
Waked the merry songster-thrum,
And the sibilant wood-creeper
Told of insect strife, begun.
But a year has gone, *ma chere*,
And again the August color
Walks the sapphire floor above us
In her star-enameled shoon.

"Let this magic month bear witness
With its flowers, its fruit, its skies,
That you've been a *laurel* pilferer,
For you won their choicest dyes.
Not a word, please! watch the flashing
Of the blue, through tissued sheen—
Why that sky-robed mist and azure
In your proud eyes rush and gleam.

"See the parted, ruddy cherries,
Like rare rubies cleft in twain;
Did you steal their wine-glow from them
With a kiss, whose pleasure—palm—
Promised that their chosen color
Still should tempt the lips of man,
Now downward, saucy challenge—
"You may taste me—if you can!"

"Now then 'Guilty or not guilty?'
If I've proved the grave charge true,
Then my fee must be the culprit,
Is it 'yes' or 'nay,' dear Rue?"

"Like all men, *ma chere*, you're yielding,
So, for fear of cherry-tempting,
I will have to answer 'Yes!'"

Looking Back.

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

THAT it was the middle of September when Julian North took his holiday, was owing to the fact that genius and affluence were with him inversely proportional.

That there was nobody in the house when he rung the bell of his country house was only a chance—that is, provided chance ever has a part in settling the course wherein mortal lives shall run. Whether it was Chance, or whether it was Fate, the fact was there.

Mr. North, with his artistic knapsack strapped across his shoulders, his valise in his hand, and the dust of travel plentifully besprinkled over him, awaited the answer to his summons. Miss Rose, in a sea-green, filmy dress, which surrounded her like a floating mist, with corals stranded in her hair, with a cluster of trailing grasses and pink buds clasped in the soft lace of her corsage, coming out through the shadowy hall stopped at sight of him.

"Oh, good morning, Mr. North," said she, as if it had been only yesterday she parted from him instead of a year before.

"Mrs. Jordan has driven into town, and there is no one left but me. There is a room ready for you somewhere up stairs; if you care to attempt finding it, I will make a raid upon the pantry, and see what may contain in the way of lunch for you. By-the-by, it is the left hand passage and second door, I believe."

"Thanks," murmured Mr. North, and went up the stairs seeing nothing but a sea-green mist floating before him.

Four hours later Mrs. Jordan drove home, and found six feet of manhood, incased in a tweed suit, with her lace embroidery frame tipped over his nose as an impromptu fly-protector, slumbering peacefully upon her parlor sofa.

"I wonder if there is another such unconscionable man in the universe! To think you should come this morning of all mornings, Julian! I have looked for you for a week, and stirred out to-day for the first, having almost given you up. How have you managed to get rid of the time since the train came in?"

"The time? Oh, that, that beguiled for me, knowledge of it, I mean. By Lariole herself, I believe, a sea-green maid, a goddess of the vasty deep, all but the dripping sea-weed and rose-lipped shells."

"Virginia Rose! she has a reputation which might rival the Luries; you want to be on your guard. Where is she now?"

"In the position of one of those persons who never have any good of themselves," Miss Rose answered, as she swung back the door and came in. "When you are possessed with a desire to slander any one in future, Mrs. Jordan, be sure that the person is out of ear-shot; the days of dueling may be exploded, but there remain other ways of forcing a refutation of libelous charges than by sacrificing our two nearest male relatives on the point of the sword."

"And truth will not admit refutation, my dear. Have you two become so well acquainted that a pretension is not necessary?"

"Not at all necessary," put in North. "Our acquaintance dates back a year. I had the pleasure of knowing Miss Rose at Ridgeway."

"Where you insisted upon burying yourself in the wilderness last season, Virginia! Would you believe it, Julian, she declares the weeks she passed in seclusion there were the very pleasantest of her life—a preposterous assertion which needs confirmation before I can believe it."

Mrs. Jordan was just a trifle obtuse, but the gleam which came into North's face, together with the glance her young lady guest shot toward her, caused her to turn from that subject precipitately.

"Now that you are here, Julian, I do hope you will be content to let brush and paints alone for a time. You must need rest after being cooped up in your studio all summer through."

"Waiting for patrons who declined to come. I haven't been overworked on orders, I do assure you, cousin mine. I need inspiration more than rest, and I am fortunate in having found it at the outset. Miss Rose has kindly promised to let me paint her in my picture, 'Looking Back.' It is to be my grand effort, and I have been for weeks in the black depths of despair at failing to find the right sort of face for it. Can you spare me one of the attic chambers for a painting-room, in addition to your other kindnesses, do you think?"

"A needless question, as you should know. The house is big enough to spare you half a dozen rooms, if you want them; you can have your choice, if you are determined to work, but depend upon it, you had better take my advice."

"Who ever does take good advice?" asked Miss Rose languidly. "Is that your better half home already, Myra? Time, we were dressing for dinner, then, I suppose."

The two ladies rustled out together as Mr. Jordan came in, and gave a hearty welcome to the new-comer beneath his hospitable roof.

"Now, Virginia," began Mrs. Jordan, half-way up the main staircase.

"Now, Myra," cut in Miss Rose, decidedly, "don't begin a lecture, if you can possibly help it. I have done nothing to deserve one."

"If you would only promise me that you will do nothing. Do show mercy toward Julian, if you never did toward any one before. He is a favorite of mine, and one of those poetical dreamers who would take a disappointment to heart more than the whole score or so of victims you have already made to feel your power. Don't add him to the list, I beg of you."

"You credit me with a degree of fatality I lay no claim to possessing, Mrs. Jordan."

"Whether or not, don't sit for that picture, Virginia. Don't put temptation in the boy's way. Besides, Mr. Harding might not like it—would not, I am sure."

"Being a woman, Mrs. Jordan should have known better than to have employed *that* as an argument."

A quick flush surged up all over the other's face; a kind of suppressed defiance flashed in her glance.

"Mr. Harding is not the arbiter of my destiny yet, whatever he may be hereafter. I have given my promise and I shall keep it; I assuredly shall sit for that picture."

Remonstrance would have been of no avail, after that. Mrs. Jordan groaned in spirit, and composed herself to look on, in the days which followed, powerless to avert the evil she felt was being wrought. The day came when sheer despair drove her into taking counsel of her husband, a move which Mrs. Jordan seldom made, never while any other resource was left to her, and then with no great expectation of benefiting by advice of his.

"If it were only an ordinary flirtation I wouldn't mind," said she, in great uneasiness. "But you know Julian; if he already isn't heart and soul in earnest, he will be soon. I heart and soul in earnest, he will be soon. I do believe he regards her as a little higher than the angels now, and the truth will cast a blight over his whole life. He promises so well, he has real genius, it does seem too great a pity that he should be sacrificed. She might be satisfied with the havoc she has made already, but it's always the way with your thorough coquettes—their occupation is gone when there are no more men's hearts to wring. I half pity her her fate before this, but now I will say the heartless creature doesn't deserve any better."

"Going to marry Harding, isn't she?" Mr. Jordan queried. "Most people would consider that no hard fate."

"Most people would only look at the outside of the matter then. The man has no more blood than a fish; he is both cruel and selfish, and worships no god but himself. I miss my mark if Virginia doesn't rue the day she ever took up with him, for all his fine house and good standing. But that won't make it any the less hard on Julian. He will not be warned, so I suppose there's no help for him."

"How would it answer if I should give Harding a hint, bring him back with me in fact, next time I go into the city? He will bring Miss Rose to time, if any one can, I'll be bound."

"It can do no harm," Mrs. Jordan conceded, with an inward sensation of relief, which, the proposition not originating with herself, she did not feel bound to express.

And thus the future lord and master of Miss Rose was brought upon the scene.

A tall thin man, with a pale face and retreating forehead, with dull light eyes, a man you would distrust by intuition after your first glance at him, a man who wore one perpetual disagreeable smile, selfish and cold-blooded—a man whom no principles of honor would sway from any purpose upon which his mind was fixed.

"A pleasant surprise for you, my dear," said Mrs. Jordan, sweetly, as she ushered him into the parlor and the presence of her two other guests. "Mr. Harding, permit me—my cousin, Mr. North."

"A surprise, certainly," said Miss Rose, but with scarcely a pleasurable accent, while Mr. North bowed in blissful unconsciousness of the mine upon which he was standing.

"You are to admit us to inspect your picture, Julian, at once; it is completed, all but the finishing touches, he tells me, Mr. Harding. You will consider that a fortunate circumstance, when I tell you that Virginia's time has been so monopolized by the painting-room, that I have had by far the least portion of her society. Here we are; and I really think we are safe in predicting our artist success."

The temporary studio was full of ruddy afternoon light. The little group closed before the easel as Julian removed the baize which covered it, and Mrs. Jordan's tongue ran on volubly.

"It is a picture, you perceive, not a portrait. One of the somber sort of pieces, and the expression is doleful as one might care to see, but it is a wonderfully vivid presentment of the subject."

It was. Looking, you saw a stately hall, with only a hint of gorgeous fittings apparent, through the murky dusk shadows filling it, with one broad shaft of pale light streaming in at an open casement. Falling full upon the face of a woman in royal purple robes, her idle hands clasped, unutterable pathos and unutterable weariness in the somber brooding eyes. The face of a woman who has made life's greatest mistake, and looks back with life's greatest weariness upon her when it is too late.

"I walk up and down among silk,
And the servants come at my call,
And my hands are whiter than milk;
But I mourn in the midst of it all,
I try and strive till I faint,
And wish I could only lie
Always asleep, and dream that I live
In the happy days gone by."

That was the story it told.

"Ah, very fine," said Mr. Harding, contemplating it. "A fanciful subject, and the face really does you credit, Virginia, in spite of its exaggerated melancholy. I think I must have the picture, Mr. North. Possession of the original will not satisfy me now; I really should not like so accurate a portrait of the future Mrs. Harding to go on exhibition, therefore consider it sold at your own price, my dear sir."

No one, apparently, observed the change which came over the artist. A shadow closed suddenly down upon his face; he glanced toward Miss Rose, but she was looking a trifle bored while she picked to pieces a knot of flowers she had worn in her belt.

"Is it true?" asked North, beside her, a moment later. Mrs. Jordan's generalship had conveyed Harding safely from the scene, and they two were alone together.

She lifted her eyes to his face, more than a little startled by his stern pallor, and answered falteringly:

"Surely you knew; everyone knew, I thought."

"As Heaven hears me, I never knew!"

The thrill of wild, despairing passion shocked her through and through. She had no power to withdraw her gaze from his; she felt, suddenly, a great horror of herself, a great pity for him in the depths of her shrinking, conscience-stricken soul. Face to face, eye to eye, for one instant they stood; in that instant each knew the truth, knew that life apart from each other would be the travesty of life's best hopes.

Then North leaned forward, that impelling glance searching hers with a solemn earnestness.

"Must it be so, Virginia? Can I not tempt you to me, my darling?"

The breathless tones, the pleading words, cut to her very heart. Could she be unselfish enough, brave enough? She had almost yielded; then she caught a glimpse of Harding's face beyond the doorway.

She turned away with a little laugh, a laugh most desolate.

"One need never fight against fate, and mine is fixed. Who knows but that that picture is prophetic?"

"Shall it be?" he asked, stilly. "It rests with you."

Should it be? She carried that question with her as she escaped from him, escaped from the house also.

Two hours later, as the day dropped into silvery dusk, Virginia stood in an obscure walk of the grounds, the traces of a struggle past, faded from her face, the peace of a moral battle gained reflected there. A footstep crunched the gravel, and she turned to face Harding as he approached.

"My dear, I have been looking for you," he began.

"And I am glad you have come, glad I have the chance to speak while I have the strength. There was a strange agitation in her voice, the quiet of intense excitement upon her as she went on hurriedly. "I merit nothing better than that you shall despise me; I have been upon the verge of doing both you and myself a great, an irreparable wrong. I promised to marry you, Mr. Harding; promised it for the sake of your wealth and your station, not for yourself. I have learned to know myself better; in justice to both let us free each other now."

There was no change on the man's cold, hatefully smiling face, but he gave her one sharp glance.

"Is it due in any degree to our talented artist that you have learned to know yourself so suddenly, Virginia?"

A hot tide swept from chin to brow, but she met his eyes steadily.

"I am not ashamed to say that it is due to him. Knowing that, you will not refuse to release me."

Grim, stern, fixed and cruel as fate itself came his reply.

"I do refuse. I never give up a purpose, once I have determined upon it, Miss Rose; and I have determined that you shall be my wife. Neither that knowledge, nor any power on earth, shall lead me to give you your freedom now."

They fell like the words of her doom. The man was jealously vindictive; that another should win what he had failed in doing, filled him with a bitter rancor, but at least it was in his power to prevent another from wearing her love.

She drew her shawl about her, and walked down to the bay, after he had left her. North was there before her, lying at length upon the sands, his moody face upturned toward the darkening sky. He sprang up as she came close to him, and, with a great rush, put out both her hands.

"Julian, save me; save me from myself and him."

All over his face broke an eager light.

"Do you mean it? Oh, my darling, my darling! you are not mocking me?"

Nothing but earnestness in her uplifted glance, earnestness all convincing. He caught her hands in an intense, rapturous clasp.

"Do you see that boat yonder, Virginia? Will you go in it with me across the bay to the minister's house, and be my wife to-night?"

"I will go. I love you, and he of his own accord will never give me up. Julian," passionately, "I would rather die with you a thousand times than live without."

Does Providence ever take us mortals at our word?

Neither North nor Miss Rose returned to Jordan House that night; next morning came some one who had seen them crossing the bay in the cockle-shell boat which was gone from the landing. Later the boat was found floating bottom up, and they were washed ashore in the glaring noon-day clasp in each other's arms, peace stamped indelibly upon each marble face. No pain of looking back for that, and, since even the truest love will sometimes wear threadbare with time, who can know but it was best so.

Harding understood what others did not, and his was the remorse which came through looking back.

Victoria:

OR,

THE HEIRESS OF CASTLE OLIFFE.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING.
AUTHOR OF "THE DARK SECRET," "AWFUL MYSTERY," "THE RIVAL BROTHERS," ETC.

CHAPTER XXIII.

VICTORIA'S BRIDAL EVE.

In the bluest of summer skies, heralded by the rosiest banners of cloud, rose up the sun on Victoria Shirley's wedding-day.

The rose-gardens around Castle Oliffe were in full bloom, the bees and butterflies held grand carnivals there all the long sultry days, and the air was heavy with their burden of perfume. The chestnuts, the oaks, the poplars, the beeches were out in their greenest garments; the swans floated about serenely in their lakes; the Swiss farm-house was radiant in the glory of new paint; and the Italian cottage was lost in a wilderness of scented creepers. The peacocks and gazelles, the deer and the dogs, had fine times in the June sunshine; and over all, the banner floated out from the flag-tower, and everybody knew that it was the bridal-day of the heiress of Castle Oliffe.

And within the mansion wonderful were the preparations. At nine in the evening the ceremony was to take place, and Lady Agnes had resolved and announced that a grand ball should follow; and at twelve the next day, they were to step into the cars and bid good-bye to Cliftonlea for two long years. A whole regiment of Gunther's men had come down from London to attend to the supper, which was to be the greatest miracle of cookery of modern times; and another regiment of young persons in the dressmaking department filled the dressing-room up-stairs. Invitations had

been sent to half the county, besides ever so many in London—so many, in fact, that the railway trains had their first-class *coupees* crowded all day, and their proprietors realized a small fortune. The grounds were all to be illuminated with colored lamps, hung in all sorts of fanciful devices. And there was to be such a feast there for the tenantry, with music and dancing afterward, and such a display of fireworks, and such a lot of bonfires, and such ringing of bells and beating of drums, and shouting and cheering, and general joy, as had never been seen or heard of before.

Lady Agnes declared herself distracted and nearly at death's door, although Mr. Sweet, who had come back from his short wedding tour, helped her as much as he could, and proved himself perfectly invaluable. And in the midst of it all, the bridegroom spent his time in riding over the sunny Sussex downs, lounging lazily through the rooms at Cliftonlea, and smoking unheard-of quantities of cigars. And the bride, shut up with Lady Agnes and the dressmakers, in the former room, was hardly ever seen by anybody—least of all by her intended husband.

But the wedding-day came, and all the snowy gear in which she was to be tricked out lay on the bed in the rose-room—gloves and slippers, and veil, and wreath, and dress; and the in-laid tables were strewn with magnificent presents, every one of them a small fortune in itself, to be publicly displayed that evening.

And Vivian, who had been shut up all day with the seamstresses, a good two hours before it was time to dress, had broken from her captors and turned to leave the room.

"Where are you going, child?" asked Lady Agnes. "There is the dressing-bell ringing."

"I don't care for the dressing-bell. I'm not going down to dinner!"

"Where are you going, then?"

"Through the house—the dear old house—to say good-bye to it before I go! There will be no time to-morrow, I suppose."

"I should think not, indeed, since we start at noon! I suppose you expect the house will say good-bye to you in return?"

"I shall think it does, at all events. I wish we were not going away at all."

"Of course you do! I never knew you wishing for anything but what was absurd! You must have dinner in your own room, and remember you are not late to dress for your wedding! It would be just like you to do it!"

Lady Agnes sailed past majestically to make her own toilet, and Vivian, with a fluttering little heart yet happy while she trembled, went from room to room to take a last look. She had nearly finished the circuit, even to the dreadful Queen's Room, and was standing in the picture-gallery, looking wistfully at the haunted faces of all her dead ancestors, when some one came wearily up the stairs, and turning, she saw Margaret Shirley. If others had been changing within the last few weeks, so had Margaret; always pale and thin, she moved about like a colorless ghost now; her black eyes, the only beauty she had ever possessed, sunken and hollow; and the deep lines about the mouth and forehead told their own story of silent suffering. She shunned everybody, and most of all, her bright and beautiful cousin Victoria, and, seeing her now standing radiant and refulgent in the amber haze of the sunset, she stopped, and made a motion as if to retreat. But the clear, sweet voice called her back:

"Don't go, Marguerite; I want you. Come here!"

Margaret came to the head of the stairs and there stopped.

"I have been wanting to see you all the week, but I could not get near you. Why do you keep away from me?"

"I do not keep away!"

"You know you do! Why are you not cordial as you used to be?"

"I am cordial! still hovering aloof."

"Come nearer, then!"

Again Margaret moved a step or two, and again stopped.

"We ought to be friends, Marguerite, since we are cousins! But we have not been friends this long time!"

No answer. Marguerite's eyes were on the floor, and her face looked petrified.

"You are to be one of my bridesmaids, and my traveling companion for the next two years; and all that proves that we ought to be friends."

"You mistake, cousin Victoria; I am not going to be your traveling companion!"

"No! Grandmamma said so!"

"Probably she thinks so!"

"You are jesting, Marguerite!"

"No!"

"Where are you going? What are you going to do?"

"Excuse me; you will learn that at the proper time!"

Vivian looked at her earnestly. An intelligent light was in her eye, and a scarlet effusion rising hot to her face, and rapidly fading out.

"You are unhappy?"

"Am I?"

"Yes; and I know the reason!"

The black eyes were raised from the floor and fixed quietly on her face.

"Shall I tell you what it is?"

"As you like!"

Vivian leaned forward, and would have laid her hand on the other's shoulder, but Marguerite recoiled, with a look on her face that reminded her cousin of Barbara. She drew back proudly and a little coldly.

"You have no right to be angry with me, cousin Marguerite! Whatever I have done has been in obedience to grandmamma's commands. If by it you are unhappy, it is no fault of mine!"

The black eyes were still looking at her quietly, and over the dark, grave face there dawned a smile sad and scornful, that said as plainly as words, "She talks, and knows not what she is talking about!" but before she could speak, Mademoiselle Jeannette came tripping up-stairs.

"Mademoiselle Genevieve, I've been searching for you all over. My lady says you are to go directly and take your dinner!"

Margaret had vanished like a spirit at the appearance of the maid; so Mademoiselle Genevieve, with a little sigh, followed her cousin to her boudoir, where the slender meal was placed. There was a little Sevres cup of coffee; a petite verre of sparkling champagne, *pate a la creme*, and an omelette; and Vivian ate the paste, and tasted the omelette, and drank the coffee and wine with a very good appetite; and had only just finished when Lady Agnes came in, and announced that it was time to dress. After her came half a dozen bridesmaids, cousin Margaret among the rest, and they were all marshaled into Lady Agnes' dressing-room, and handed over to a certain French artist, who had come all the way from London to dress their hair. Vivian's beautiful tresses required least time of all, for they were to be simply worn in flowing curls, according to her jaunty custom; but most of the other damsels had to be braided, and banded, and scented, and "done up" in the latest style.

This important piece of business took a long time, and when it was over, monsieur withdrew. The *femmes de chambre* flocked in; and Vivian, under the hands of Jeannette and Hortense, went to her own room to be dressed. Lady Agnes followed, looking as if she had something on her mind.

"There is no time to lose!" she said to the maids. "You will have to make your young lady's toilet as fast as you can; and Victoria, child, don't look so pale! A little paleness is eminently proper in a bride; but I want you to look ever so pretty to-night!"

"I shall try to, grandmamma! What are all the people about down-stairs?"

"They are all dressing, of course! and it is time I was following their example," glancing at her watch.

"Grandmamma," said Vivian, struck with a little cloud on that lady's serene brow, "you have been annoyed. What is it?"

"It is nothing—that is, nothing but a trifle; and all about that absurd boy, Tom!"

Vivian started suddenly, and caught her breath. Since the night under the chestnuts she had not seen Tom—no one had; and it was a daily subject of wonder and inquiry.

"Grandmamma, has anything happened to him?"

"Nothing that I am aware of—certainly nothing to make you wear such a frightened face. But what will you think when I tell you he is in Cliftonlea and never comes here? It is the most annoying and absurd thing I ever heard of, and everybody talks about it!"

"How do you know he is in Cliftonlea?"

"Your papa saw him last night. He, and Captain Douglas, and some more of the gentlemen had been out at the meet of the Duke of B—'s hounds; and, riding home about dark, they saw him down there near the beech woods. They called to him, but he disappeared among the trees, and the people here have done nothing but talk of it all day long. Rogers, the gamekeeper, says he has seen him haunting the place in the strangest manner for the last few days, as if he was afraid to be seen."

The paleness with which the speaker had found fault deepened as Vivian listened, and her heart seemed to stand still.

"It is the most unaccountable thing I ever heard of; and I never saw your papa so vexed about a trifle as he is about this. I cannot understand it at all."

But her granddaughter could; and she averted her face that grandmamma's sharp eyes might not read the tale it told. The eagle eyes saw, however, and her arm was suddenly grasped.

"Victoria, you can read the riddle. I see it in your eyes. When did you meet Tom last?"

No answer.

"Speak!" said the lady, low but imperiously. "When was it?"

"Last Monday night."

"Where?"

"Out under the chestnuts."

"What did he say to you?"

"Grandmamma, don't ask me! And the pale cheek turned scarlet."

Lady Agnes looked at her a moment with her cold and piercing eyes, and then dropped her arm.

"I see it all," she said, a haughty flush dyeing her own delicate cheek. "He has been making a fool of himself, and has got what he deserved. He is wise to stay away; if he comes within reach of me, he will probably hear something more to the point than he heard under the chestnuts! When I am dressed I will come back."

The thin lips were compressed. The proud eyes flashed blue flame as Lady Agnes swept out of the rose-room. If looks were lightning, and Tom Shirley near enough, he would certainly never make love to any one else on earth!

But Vivian's face had charged sadly, and she stood under the hands of the two maids all unconscious of their doings and their presence, and thinking only of him. She thought of a thousand other things, too—things almost forgotten. Her whole life seemed to pass like a panorama before her. She thought dimly, as we think of a confused dream, of a poor home, and a little playmate that had been her home, long ago; then of the quiet content in her dear France, where year after year passed so serenely; of the pleasant chateau, where her holidays were spent; of Claude who had been almost as dear to her as Tom, and whose life she had embittered like his; of the first visit to England and to this beloved home, where she had met this stately grandmamma and idolized father; and then, more vividly than all the rest, came back the first meeting with Barbara Black. Again she was kneeling in the Demon's Tower with Margaret crouching in a corner, her black eyes shining like stars in the gloom—Tom at her feet, bleeding and helpless; the raging sea upon them in its might; the black night sky; the walling wind and lashing rain, and a little figure in a frail skiff flying over the billows to save them. They had been so good to her, and she had loved her so well—Barbara and Margaret; but, somehow, she had alienated them all, and they loved her no longer. What was it that was wanting in her? what was this string of tune that had made the discord? Was she only a sounding brass and tinkling cymb

waist crowned with a wreath of jeweled orange-blossoms sparkling with diamond dewdrops; and over all, and sweeping the carpet, a bridal veil, encircling the shining figure like a cloud of mist. But the lovely head, the perfect face drooping in its exquisite modesty, and blushing and smiling at its own beauty, neither lace, nor velvets, nor jewels were aught compared to that.

"My darling!" cried Lady Agnes, in an ecstasy very, very uncommon with her, "you look like an angel to-night!"

"Dear, dear grandmamma, I care for nothing if I only please you. Are the rest all ready?"

"I have not been to see, but I am going. Do you know?" lowering her voice, "a most singular thing has occurred."

"What?"

"It is only half an hour to the time appointed for the ceremony, the drawing-room is filled, everybody is there, but the one that should be there most of all."

"Who's that?"

"There's a question! Leicester Cliffe, of course."

"Has he not come, then?"

"No, indeed; and when he does come, he shall be taken most severely to task for this delay. The man who would keep such a bride waiting, deserves—deserves—the bastinado! No, that would be too good for him; deserves to lose her."

Vivia laughed.

"Oh, grandmamma, that would be too bad. Has Uncle Roland come?"

"Uncle Roland has been here fully an hour, and knows nothing about the matter. It appears the young gentleman has been out riding all day, and never made his appearance until dinner, when he drank more wine than usual or prudent with bridegrooms, and behaved himself in a manner that was very strange altogether."

"What did he do?"

"Oh, I don't know; he was queer and excited, Sir Roland says; but he thought little of that, considering the circumstances. He has seen nothing of him since, and came here in the full expectation of seeing him here before him."

"Well, grandmamma, he will be here before the end of the half-hour, I suppose, and that will do, won't it?"

"It will do for the wedding, but it won't save him from a severe Caudle lecture from me—a sort of foretaste of what he may expect of you in the future. Everything seems to be going wrong, and I feel as if it would be the greatest relief to box somebody's ears."

Lady Agnes looked it, and Vivia laughed again.

"You might box mine, grandmamma, and relieve your feelings, only it would spoil my veil, and Jeannette would never forgive you for that."

But Lady Agnes was knitting her brows, and not paying the least attention to her.

"To think he should be late on such an occasion! It is unheard of—it is outrageous!"

"Oh, grandmamma, don't worry. I am sure he cannot help it; perhaps, he is come now."

"Here come your bridesmaids, at all events," said Lady Agnes, as the communicating door opened, and the bevy of gay girls floated in, robed in white, and crowned with flowers, and gathered round the bride like butterflies round a rose, and—

"Oh, how charming! Oh, how lovely! Oh, how beautiful! This is the universal cry. 'You are looking very best to-night, Victoria.'"

"So she ought, and so will you all, young ladies, on your wedding night," said Lady Agnes.

"Is it time to go down? Has everybody come?" inquired one.

"It is certainly time to go down, but I do not know whether anybody has come. Hark! is not that your papa's voice in the hall, Victoria?"

"Yes. Do let him come in, grandmamma. I know he would like to see me before going down stairs."

Lady Agnes opened the door, and saw her son coming rapidly through the hall, looking very pale and stern.

"Has Leicester come yet?"

"No."

"Good Heavens! And it is nine o'clock!"

"Exactly. And all those people below are gathered in groups, and whispering mysteriously. By Heavens! I feel tempted to put a bullet through his head when he does come."

"Oh, Cliffe! something has happened?"

"Papa—leaving the bride ready?"

"Yes; come in, she wishes to see you—the bride is ready; but where is the bridegroom?"

"Where, indeed? But don't alarm yourself yet; he may come after all."

He followed his mother into the bride's maiden bower, and that dazzling young lady came forward with a radiant face.

"Papa, how do I look?"

"Don't ask me; look in the glass. You are all angles, every one of you."

He touched his lips to the pretty brow, and tried to laugh, but it was a failure; and then, nervous as a girl, for the first time in his life, with anxiety, he hurried out and down stairs, to see if the truant had come.

No, he had not come. The bonfires were blazing, the joy-bells were ringing, the park was one blaze of rainbow-light, all the clocks in the town were striking nine, and Leicester Cliffe had not come. Sir Roland, nearly beside himself with mortification and rage, was striding up and down the hall.

"Is she ready?" he asked.

"Yes," said the colonel, using the words of his mother, "the bride is ready and waiting, but where the devil is the bridegroom?"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 269.)

Yellowstone Jack:

OR,
THE TRAPPERS OF THE ENCHANTED GROUND.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.,
AUTHOR OF "OLD BULL'S-EYE, THE LIGHTNING
SHOT OF THE PLAINS."

CHAPTER XVI.

YELLOWSTONE JACK AND THE WITCH.

YELLOWSTONE JACK and Brindle Joe pressed forward at top speed upon the trail of the weird woman. Yet their progress was comparatively slow, the bed of the canon growing more obstructed by bush and boulder the further they advanced, until, at last, the two trappers could not proceed faster than at a walk.

The weird woman had disappeared, but Yellowstone could hear her forcing a passage through the vine clad bushes, whenever he paused to listen. It was quite evident that she knew they were pursuing her.

By this time Yellowstone had grown cool and collected as usual, and saw that unless he was more cautious he would lose his game after all. Nothing would be easier than for the

weird woman to slip into some of the numerous holes and coverts that lined both sides of the canon, and lie still until the trappers had passed by, then take the back trail and give them the slip without any trouble. If he could once drive the game from the canon, he felt confident of the result. Surely two trappers could run down a woman in a fair chase. And with this end in view he set to work.

Separating, he and Joe advanced leisurely, thoroughly beating the cover before them, to make sure the game was still afoot. Owing to their activity, they still advanced at a fair rate.

"Yender she goes!" cried Brindle Joe, pointing ahead, where he had just caught a glimpse of the weird woman who was fleeing with unabated speed and vigor.

"Make fer the spot at once, then; no need o' wastin' time beatin' up whar we know she ain't," replied Yellowstone Jack, increasing his speed.

Little did either of the trappers dream what a prize they had missed by leaving this patch of brush unsearched. Even at that moment a pair of dark eyes were glaring at them from the cover. At any other time the acute sight of Brindle Joe would have detected signs of a fresh trail, but now neither he nor Yellowstone had eyes for aught other than the weird woman—for the slayer of their comrade, Chavez.

"I raaly b'lieve the critter is a spook!" muttered Brindle Joe. "Look how she holds her arms—we'd 'a' run a buck Injin down afore this, an' she don't 'pear to be fazed one mite!"

"Spook or human, I'm goin' to see the wind-up, or else bu'st somethin'," grated Yellowstone Jack. "F I ain't ketch her a runnin', I'll try what virtue thar is in a quarter-ounce o' lead."

"Wish 't you'd 'a' run up that silver dollar," muttered Brindle Joe, dubiously. "Lead's no good thar!"

"Don't know—the old man handled her spook as he flesh an' blood. Don't reckon a spook 'd 'a' fell so solid as she did ag'in'st the rocks. But thar—spread out. We must keep her afore us of we want to make a coup."

In this manner the chase lasted over nearly two miles of the canon bed. At times the trappers would lose sight of the weird woman, and fearing she had sought some covert, hoping thus to give them the slip, they would beat the bushes, peer into every rocky niche as they passed by, and presently catch a glimpse of their game far ahead of them. Then another spurt would end as before. Yet they knew that this could not last much longer, for the canon ended less than half a mile further, after which the ground was more open. And upon this, they hoped to soon run the weird woman down, unless, indeed, she should prove the witch they had at first believed her.

"Jest look at the pizen cat!" exclaimed Brindle Joe, in a tone of wonder, pointing ahead.

Active and quick-footed almost as the mountain goat, the witch of the enchanted valley was scaling the rocks that blocked up the end of the canon. As Brindle Joe spoke, she gained the top, and waved her staff with a little cry of triumph toward the pursuers.

"Et ye're human, hyar's whar'll make ye a sperrit in good aimes!" grated Yellowstone Jack, as he hastily leveled his rifle at the witch and fired.

When the smoke cleared, there was nothing to be seen but rocks and bushes. The trappers glanced at each other. The samethought might have been read in the eyes of both. Their superstition was fully aroused.

"T went smack through her an' she didn't winch," muttered Brindle Joe, nervously.

"I drewed a fa'r bead—nur I ain't in the habit o' missin' marks o' that bigness so clost by. Et she's human, I'd 'a' downed her, shore!"

"Reckon we'd better take the back trail. I don't like this kind o' business overly much—'t don't set well on my stomach," added Joe, with a sickly grin.

"You kin, if ye like, but I won't. I'll see this thing through or bu'st. I sot out to folle the—the critter, an' foller her I will, et she leads me to the very gates o' Hades itself," de liberately uttered Yellowstone Jack, as he carefully reloaded his rifle.

Though his face was pale and set, there was a look of determination in his eyes that Brindle Joe could not mistake, and he knew his comrade too well to attempt a remonstrance. Instead, he said:

"So be it, then. Brindle Joe mayn't be much account, but he's too white to sneak out o' a scrape his pardner means to face. I reckon on 'n' I'd order be a match fer the old 'un, even if she does lead us thar—so pitch yer jummy!"

Many a man has been immortalized for less courage than the two trappers then displayed, even though their antagonist was but a crazed woman—and superstition.

Cautiously scaling the rocks, Yellowstone Jack peered over the top. He could see nothing of the weird woman, but he did discover something else that drew a cry from his lips as he scrambled forward.

Several drops of fresh blood were sprinkled upon the white rocks. It was here that the woman had last been seen. Beyond a doubt this blood was hers.

"How air you spook!" laughed Yellowstone Jack, his face brightening. "Now what ye think, Brindle Joe?"

"I reckon we've bin makin' pizen fools o' ourselves," quoth the trapper, after closely examining the telltale spots. "Spooks don't hev blood—leastwise so Black Harris says. He said he rammed daylight clear through his spook, at the medicine spring, a round dozen o' times, an' nary a drop o' blood did it let out. I reckon we've struck a crazy critter, 'stead o' a spook."

"Crazy or not, she rubbed out Mexy. Don't fergit thar," quickly replied Yellowstone Jack.

"Thar she goes!" cried Brindle Joe, pointing ahead. "Makin' fer the medicine valley, too. 'F she gits thar fast, it's good by John!"

Yellowstone made no reply, but sprang forward at full speed after the fleeing woman. Their delay in reloading and examining the rocks had given the weird woman fully a mile start, and she was running swiftly, heading for the valley of the boiling spring, now not more than two-thirds of a mile distant.

Yellowstone Jack was a splendid runner, and gradually left Brindle Joe in the rear, rapidly gaining upon the fugitive. He was not more than two hundred yards behind when she entered the valley, and strained every nerve to its utmost tension, hoping to overtake her before she could reach the spring where she had so mysteriously eluded him once before, even dropping his rifle in his eagerness.

The witch gained the curb surrounding the spring, and flung herself headlong forward. But just at that moment the strong hands of Yellowstone Jack closed upon her skin garments.

"Pitch your jummy!" was once popular bit of Western slang, though from what derived, I cannot learn.

ments, and he strove to drag her back. She kicked vigorously, and striking his shin, knocked his feet from under him, and then both fell together into the Boiling Spring.

A cry of horror burst from Brindle Joe's lips as he saw them disappear and saw the spray dash up, telling him that both had fallen into the medicine spring. And the superstition that was his second self whispered him that Yellowstone Jack had fallen blindly into a trap set for him by the spook, who had led them on in this wild race for no other purpose.

And still, while believing this, the faithful fellow ran forward and scrambled up the curb. He stood there as if petrified. Then a violent trembling seized upon his limbs.

The spring was quietly bubbling up in the center, as usual. Its waters were clear and limpid. The bottom was clearly visible, as well as the sides. There was not a trace of either Yellowstone or the witch. Where had they gone?

With a cry of horror Brindle Joe tumbled down the white curb and dashed swiftly down the valley. But he did not run far before he checked himself, and glanced back. Then he uttered, huskily:

"Durned ef I do! I tole Yellowstone I'd see it through, an' I will—or die for't! 'He's gone—I kin feel it in my bones. 'Tain't likely he'll ever be let come back, but she will—she did once, fer this makes twice I've seed her jump in thar. An' when she does come, she'll find me. Mebbe 'twon't do no good—but I'll shoot her ef powder an' lead kin do the job. 'Sposin' it don't—what then? Mebbe she'll take me to whar Jack is! and, strange as it may seem, the rough trapper found consolation in the idea.

It was no common bond that united the trappers. Their love for each other was stronger and purer than that existing between most brothers.

Brindle Joe retraced his steps and crouched down beside the curbed mound already referred to. Then, with cocked rifle, he watched the medicine spring.

He had scarcely settled himself in this position, when he sprung to his feet with a low cry. A strange sound came to his ears, faint and indistinct, but indescribably sweet. It seemed like one singing in the distance, nor could he tell from what direction the sound proceeded, though he slowly circled round the mound. He could see nothing unusual. The valley seemed uninhabited save by himself.

"It's some spook business," he muttered, as he doggedly seated himself in his former position. "Mebbe they want to skeer me away—let 'em skeer an' be durned!"

The spring ceased as abruptly as it had begun, and then Brindle Joe heard a faint sound just above his head. Glancing up, he saw a figure standing upon the mound, and quickly flung up his rifle. But before he could shoot, the shape disappeared.

Now thoroughly aroused, the trapper dropped his rifle, and with bared knife clenched betwixt his teeth, he scaled the mound. This was a difficult task, for the sides were hard and slippery, save here and there a slight knob or projection. As he gained the top, a cry of astonishment broke from his lips.

This mound has been spoken of as a sort of truncated cone, evidently composed of the same substance as that surrounding the Boiling Spring. But now Brindle Joe found that the cone was but a shell—that it contained a hollow shaped like the inside of an iron pot or kettle. The sides were smooth and even; a few points and knobs could be seen, but nothing large enough to conceal a kitter. And yet there was nothing to be seen of the figure he had just caught a glimpse of. Little wonder that he was surprised.

"It's the devil's work!" gasped Joe, tremblingly. "Yit—thar's Yellowstone! Mebbe thar's a hole or a trap down thar—mebbe it's only tricks, a'er all."

With this the trapper attempted to descend the hollow. His foot slipped and he bumped down with more speed than comfort. Disregarding his bruises, Brindle Joe carefully searched upon every side for a hidden opening, but in vain. Not even a crack in the hard, smooth substance could he discover. Mad with disappointment, he stamped heavily upon the side. It seemed solid. There was no echo.

CHAPTER XVII.

AT LAST!

FORTUNATE indeed was it for Mat Mole that the weird woman did not repeat her blow. As it was, the outlaw lay senseless for more than an hour, and it was nearly twice that length of time before he recovered sufficiently from the shock to resume his course toward camp.

He had not caught a glimpse of his assailant, but immediately jumped to the conclusion that it was Pethonista, the Blackfoot chief, who had dogged his steps and felled him with a coward's blow, that he might carry out his first intentions regarding both the maidens. Mole himself would, on occasion, have acted in this manner, so it was but natural that he should accuse the Eagle. And bitter were the curses he heaped upon the chief's head, vowing deep revenge for the outrage.

The position of the mound told him that a long time had elapsed since the stroke; far too long for him to hope to overtake his assailant that night, even if he could strike the right trail. And so he made the best of his way through the hills toward his camp. At least John Warren's party should not escape him.

But, as the reader knows, he was doomed to disappointment in this matter, also. Before he could reach the valley in which he had left his followers and Blackfoot allies, he heard the sound of firearms, and from the direction, knew that the emigrant train had been attacked. He knew then that the impetuous Night-Walker had grown impatient at his long absence, and had made the attempt. He knew, too, that his men would not allow the Blackfeet to attack alone, lest they should discover the chest of gold he had spoken of.

"They'd no right to move without my orders, curse them!" snarled the outlaw. "But then, maybe 'is for the best, after all. I don't believe the girls have had time to reach the train, since that traitor Eagle struck me such a foul blow, and if not, we can easily pick them up to-morrow. Guess I'd better go look after the boys, anyhow. Ten to one they'll get to blows among themselves over the gold."

But the worthy Mole was taking far too much for granted. Instead of finding his men quarrelling over their booty, he met them struggling back, badly whipped, fully one-half of their number being killed or disabled. They had fought with uncommon daring, pressing to the front to be the first ones to grasp the golden prize, and had suffered in proportion.

As this is not intended for a Billingsgate dictionary, the reader will understand why I pass briefly over the proceedings of the outlaw and his confederates during the remainder

of that night. Certainly the office of recording angel was no sinecure.

Night-Walker was not to be found. None of his party had seen him since the retreat. Naturally, in his absence, Mat Mole assumed control of the Blackfeet, since he was a regularly chosen sub-chief of their nation. He sent a number of braves off for reinforcements, both to the nearest village, and in other directions, in hopes of calling in some of the many hunting-parties then out at chase. His own men, with the remaining Blackfeet, he stationed among the hills, with orders to keep a close look-out and to report any decisive movement upon the part of the emigrants. It was not his intention to venture another attack until certain of success, feeling confident that long ere the emigrants could regain their regular trail, where they might combine with other trains, the entire tribe of Blackfeet would be at his disposal, when he could crush his prey at a grasp.

Though worn and jaded, besides suffering considerably from the contusion upon his head, the outlaw could not compose himself to rest. Even though the train should be destroyed and the emigrants massacred, his work would have been for naught unless he recovered the maiden who was so strangely torn from his grasp.

By comparing notes, he knew that it would have been impossible for Minnie to have reached the train before the attack, and she certainly had not done so since. Then where could she be? Hiding among the hills? Certainly not, unless held a prisoner by some one, unless, indeed, she had fallen into some one of the many ravines or sinks. Could it be that Pethonista was holding her for himself—that he had set his head on having two white squaws? That was possible—with any other Indian it would be very probable.

Reasoning thus, Mat Mole scouted through the hills and around the emigrants' camp, in hopes of solving his doubts in one way or another.

Little after daybreak he struck the trail left by the weird woman, some distance beyond the point where she had saluted the rival parties fighting for possession of the train, and his keen, well-trained eye soon discovered the prints of a small, slender foot, that he knew could only belong to one of the two maidens. Hoping it would prove to be Minnie's trail, he exerted his utmost skill for over an hour, losing the trail fully as many times in a hundred rods, finally being thrown entirely off the scent. The ground was dry and rocky. A human foot scarce left a trace behind.

For more than an hour he searched for the continuation of the trail, but in vain. It was lost beyond recovery. And then, as one is apt to do when sorely puzzled, he wandered on aimlessly, deep buried in thought. His head was bent down, his eyes resting listlessly upon the ground, when all at once he gave a start and stooped over some object that caught his gaze.

"It's the same track—only I don't see the girl's!" he muttered, eagerly. "Still, she is such a light weight, this ground wouldn't take much of a trail from her. I'll follow it now, or bu'st something!"

Calling all his skill into play, Mat Mole did follow the trail until it led him to the foot of a pile of rocks that he knew formed one end of Bad Wolf canon. They evidently passed over this, and after some hesitation he resolved to follow it to the end. Once in the canon he soon picked up the broken trail, and found less difficulty in following it, though still he could see no signs of Minnie's having passed along there.

"Perhaps she's carried—anyhow, if not here, and I find this fellow, 'twill go hard with me but what I'll force the truth out of him, no matter who or what he is."

Shortly after this Mat Mole heard a rifle-shot, mingled with a shrill yell that could only proceed from the lips of a death-stricken Indian. And knowing that the enemies of the Indians were equally his foes, the outlaw lost no time in reaching it.

A few minutes later he heard a yell from below, and then a wild, strange figure glided swiftly past his covert. The brief glimpse he had not dared carry recognition with it, and he believed the fugitive was an Indian. He had about decided to follow after, to learn what had occurred, when he heard rapid footsteps, and covered back. Yellowstone Jack and Brindle Joe dashed past him. Mole had never met them before, nor did he care particularly about making their acquaintance.

He heard a rifle-shot from above, and then started on down the canon, thinking he had better make good his retreat before the mountain men should return. He could see now, from the fresh trail as he passed over a moist, sandy spot, that the fugitive was the person he had been trailing, consequently there was nothing for him to hope from that quarter.

He would make the best of his way out from the canon, and return to his camp, trusting that matters would come all right in due course of time.

And so he blindly rushed upon his doom! Suddenly Mat Mole crouched down beside a rock, half-raising his rifle. But after a keen glance at the suspicious object he arose and advanced.

"A body—that then accounts for the shot and yell I heard," he muttered, as he stooped over the mang'd heap. "As I live, 'tis the Eagle!" he added, in surprise, catching up the left hand and looking at it closely. "The middle finger missing, and here is my name, just as I picked it the day we took that oath to be brothers forever."

Mat Mole was so deeply interested in this discovery that he did not hear the faint rustling sound as the bushes parted behind him, nor the stealthy step as a wild-looking figure stealthily glided nearer and nearer, an expression of horrible exultation resting upon the haggard features and glowing in the large, sunken eyes.

Then a hoarse, snarling cry sounded in his ears, and he was forced to the ground, while iron fingers seemed fairly tearing his throat out. In vain his struggles—though more than ordinarily strong, the outlaw was now in the hands of one beside whom he was a very infant.

"At last—at last! I've got ye at last, Zene Kallach!" snarled the giant, whirling his captive over upon his back, and glaring into his face. "Look at me—do ye know me? Hev I changed so much? It's your work, then—you made me what I am—an' now you've got to pay for it, Zene Kallach!"

"I ain't Zene Kallach. There's some mistake," faltered the outlaw, as his throat was released.

"Don't lie—don't lie to me. I know ye—an' you know me, too; I kin see it in your eyes. An' now I've got yed'y know what I'm goin' to do, Zene Kallach! I'm goin' to kill ye—not all at once. No—no! that'd be too great a blessing fer such as you. I've got to pay ye fer all—fer her—fer Mary, fer her mother who died o' a broken heart over her child's disgrace—fer myself—fer everythin'. It's a big debt, but it's got to be paid, es far es your

or'nary life kin pay it. See—this i the way I'm goin' to pay it—by inches!"

As he spoke the madman caught up a rock and placing it upon the outlaw's outstretched hand, slowly bore down upon it with gradually increasing force until the flesh parted and the bones smashed to powder. A wild cry of anguish broke from the outlaw's lips, and Jethro Cowles laughed with demoniac glee.

"Yell on—it's music, sweet music in my ears! I mean to hev heaps of it afore I'm done wi' you. Ha! you'd bite like the pizen snake you air, would ye?" he added, as Mole made a desperate effort to draw a knife with his sound hand. "You musn't do that—you've hed your fun, a-torturin' me—ef you hed a thousand lives, you couldn't suffer like I hev done—it's your turn to b'ar it now."

With these words, despite the outlaw's furious struggles, the madman pressed the blood-stained rock upon Mole's other hand until it was crushed to a shapeless pulp.

With a low moan the wretched victim swooned.

The maniac rushed into the den where Frank Maynard was lying in a fever of anxiety at the horrible sounds without, and seizing a huge calabash of water returned to his prey.

"You musn't die so soon—no, no! You haven't tasted your punishment yit—not begun to, he muttered, as he dashed the water into the outlaw's face, then trod heavily upon the mangled hand.

The pain restored Mole, quicker than anything else, and with a howl of agony he leaped to his feet. But then the giant flung him heavily back, with a grating laugh.

"You run away once—you can't do it now, Zene Kallach. You've got to stand up to the rack an' take your fodder, es near like a man es such a snake kin."

"Kill me at once—don't keep me in such misery!"

"For years an' years you've kep' me in misery, was a million times than you can ever feel. Folks say I'm crazy, but I mean to show ye I'm smart enough to torture you a bit. Ef you ain't satisfied, I'm sorry. I would like to please ye all I kin. But thar—snough foolin', Zene Kallach, your time has come. I'm goin' to kill ye—to torture ye in every way I kin. You know what I've got ag'in'st ye, an' you kin guess whether I'll let you off easy."

Clutching the maimed outlaw by the throat, the giant rudely stripped him to the skin. Then he bound his feet together, despite his struggles, and hung him head downward from a broken limb of the stunted pine tree.

Then he drew his knife.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 278.)

Tiger Dick:

OR,
THE CASHIER'S CRIME.

A TALE OF MAN'S HATE AND WOMAN'S FAITH.

BY PHILIP S. WARNE.

CHAPTER III.

A STARTLING ANNOUNCEMENT.

FLORENCE GOLDTHORP's home was in a state of wild excitement. The coachman, upon going out to his morning's duties, had found her filly, under saddle and reeking with sweat, standing with her head over the gate. His first impression was that his young mistress had gone out for an early morning ride, and been thrown from her horse. But her maid had gone up and tapped on the door, and not receiving an answer, had entered and found that Florence's bed had not been occupied during the night.

Then her uncle was called, and he soon had servants riding in hot haste in every

"Mr. Creswell, we will not discuss the matter further, if you please; but I will enter immediately upon the search. The event will prove who is right."

Charley Brewster more than suspected where Fred had last seen Florence; so he rode directly to the glade. A little search revealed a place where a horse had been left standing, as indicated by the marks of his hoofs. Charley went down the bridge-path, and in the bower found a proof of her presence—her handkerchief. With this he rode back to her uncle in gloomy thought.

There was a bitter smile on Mr. Creswell's lips as he received it.

"You still think him a paragon of uprightness and virtue," he sneered.

"Excuse me, Mr. Creswell. I am going home; but I do not abandon the search, nor shall I, until Frederick Powell is proved innocent or guilty of this dastardly act."

The stern look on his brow and the suppressed emotion in his voice showed that even his confidence was shaken at last.

At home he found a note awaiting him. It ran:

"Come to me without delay. Eureka!"

"DRAPER."

These few words threw Charley into a fever of excitement. Leaping again upon his horse, he rode at the top of his speed to the place where he knew he would find the detective.

Mr. Draper put his fingers on his lips, and in silence ushered his excited young friend into a room and secured the door.

"Have you found Fred?" was Charley's first breathless question.

"No."

"No?"

"His face dropped in blank disappointment."

"But I have found something of vastly more importance," pursued the detective, rubbing his hands in satisfaction.

"What?" asked Charley, with renewed interest.

"A person worth twenty Freds to us, at this stage of the game," continued Draper, mysteriously.

"Whom, pray tell?"

"CECIL BEAUMONT!"

"What?"

"No less a person than Cecil Beaumont."

The detective was in an ecstasy of delight. Charley stared at him in blank bewilderment.

"Why, Cecil Beaumont is dead and buried!"

"Not a bit of it, my dear sir!"

"What do you say?"

"I said: 'Not a bit of it, my dear sir.' Didn't you understand me?" asked Draper, enjoying Charley's bewilderment.

"Yes, I understood you. But what do you mean?"

"That it is the easiest thing in the world to be mistaken."

"But I saw him with my own eyes. A score of his friends saw him. Then I saw and recognized him again in his grave. There was no room for mistake."

"You are sure?"

"I am positive."

"Yet the features were mutilated."

"Yes, but not so as to affect the immediate and unquestionable recognition of him."

"Mr. Brewster, if Frederick Powell was on trial before us now, could you swear to the identity of the body that was taken from Dead Man's Hole, and supposed to be that of Cecil Beaumont?"

"Without a shadow of hesitancy."

"Then he would not be the first innocent man whose life has been sworn away under a mistaken positiveness—that's all!"

The detective spoke with such assurance that Charley was staggered.

"Will you please to explain yourself?" he asked.

"The first instant that I set my eyes on the body lying out yonder in the graveyard, I knew that it was not the body of the man known to you as Cecil Beaumont."

"Known to you as Cecil Beaumont?" repeated Charley, inquiringly.

"That is not his real name; but excuse me from going into his early life."

"Well?"

"You doubtless noticed that I was very strongly affected at sight of the body?"

"I wondered at it somewhat."

"You saw me lift the hair from one of the temples?"

"Yes, and I discovered a scar beneath the hair."

"Did Cecil Beaumont have a scar on his temple?"

"Not that I ever knew of. I remember thinking of it at the time."

"Mr. Brewster, that was confirmatory evidence of what I recognized by other signs. Cecil Beaumont has no such scar on his temple! The body yonder in the graveyard is not his."

"Whose is it, then?"

"Excuse me, I cannot enlighten you yet. Enough that it is not Beaumont, and that I saw him last night in the flesh, alive and well."

"Mr. Draper, I can hardly credit your words. But if you knew both Beaumont and the man supposed to be him, and knew of their remarkable resemblance, it must be as you say."

"I have known both men for several years; and the mistake so nearly fatal to Frederick Powell was perfectly natural—indeed unavoidable. They were so nearly alike that their most intimate acquaintances would with difficulty have distinguished them, but for a scar which the mutilation hid."

"But how did it happen that this man, who so nearly resembles Cecil, was killed just at this time? And why has not Beaumont come forward and announced himself, to save an innocent man from the gallows?"

"To your first question, I reply that it is one of those inscrutable coincidences that sometimes happen in this world. With regard to your second question, I have my own thoughts. Time will prove whether they are correct. Until then, I say nothing. My immediate plan is to associate you with myself and several men whom I have already in my employ, and get possession of the man whom I know to be Cecil Beaumont."

"You may depend upon me, Mr. Draper, for all the assistance in my power, though I confess the whole thing is a puzzle to me," said the sorely-perplexed Brewster.

"I knew that I could count upon you. We start this evening at sunset."

"By the way, you must not have far to look for Fred. Of course you have heard of the disappearance of Miss Goldthorp?"

"No, I had not. When? And what has become of her?"

"She has been induced to abandon her home by Frederick Powell. If you can establish the identity of the man whom you say we were all mistaken in, and produce the real Cecil Beaumont alive, it may not turn out so calamitously as I feared. But Frederick, by his own confession, believed himself a murderer; and when he induced her to join him in his flight, he thought that he was linking her to a felon, and making her life one long exile—an endless hiding from outraged justice. Such an act is inexcusable—it is a wrong without palliation. I have always esteemed him as my friend. I would not have believed him capable of so dastardly an action. I am humiliated to have to say that I have been most sadly mistaken in him!"

"Well, Mr. Brewster, you have had your say; now let me have mine. Frederick Powell never had anything to do with the disappearance of Miss Goldthorp, and is at this moment as ignorant as he is innocent of it."

"But, sir, we have his own word for it. See! here is his letter. I forgot to return it to Mr. Creswell."

The detective glanced at the letter and smiled.

"What do you think of this?" he asked, drawing a paper from his pocket and handing it to Charley.

It read:

"A person answering the description of Frederick Powell was last night seen in this city. The matter did not come to the knowledge of the police until the man had again effected his escape. Prompt measures have been taken for a thorough search."

"That is a copy of a telegram received this morning from St. Louis," said Draper, watching Charley with a curious smile.

"Ah! but how easy to be mistaken in the identity of a person, where one has only a description to go by. The error which you ascribe to us, who have known the man for years, is ample illustration of my point."

"I admit that you have me there," laughed the detective; "and yet I have every confidence in the telegram."

"But, my dear sir, his own writing," persisted Charley. "And this letter must have been delivered yesterday, the very day on which you suppose him to have been hundreds of miles away."

Mr. Draper's eyes twinkled more merrily than ever, as Charley became earnest in the debate.

"Mr. Brewster," he said, "it seems to me very late in the day for you to yield your belief in humanity to the superficial appearance of things. Only a week ago you would not believe him guilty of forgery, though the suspicion rested upon precisely the same sort of evidence—what seemed to be his own handwriting."

"And do you mean to imply that this is not his writing?"

"Is it more likely than in the other case?" Charley started with a new idea.

"And you say that Cecil Beaumont is alive—that you have seen him! What a fool I have been!"

"Not at all. It only goes to show that as soon as we begin to defend our opinions, we all of us become partisan."

Mr. Draper, do you believe that Florence Goldthorp is in the hands of Cecil Beaumont?"

"From what you tell me, I have not the slightest doubt of it."

"My dear sir, she must be rescued, and that speedily! I shudder to think of her situation in his power!" cried Charley, earnestly, grasping the hand of the detective.

"She shall be released to-night."

"Not before! Why delay? Every moment must be an age of torture, and may see the consummation of a calamity that time cannot retrieve."

"We must risk it. I dare not move until after dark. Precipitancy now might lose her beyond recovery."

"But what prevents our going to her immediately?"

"I am under the constant espionage of Tiger Dick, through his emissary Shadow Jim, a most accomplished spy, I must admit. He would make a king of detectives! I have to proceed with the utmost caution, for fear of flushing my covey. Having you call upon me in open daylight is a move to make them think that I have not my eye upon them, and do not know of their spying. If they should suspect that I was familiar with their covert, they would flit, and then where should I look for them again?"

"I wait," said Charley; "but it is with the most soul-harrowing forebodings."

CHAPTER IV.

THE TIGER RUNS TO COVER.

WHEN the news of Florence Goldthorp's disappearance reached Tiger Dick, he first swore roundly and then sat down and pondered deeply. In this second step he proved himself a philosopher; for while the former proceeding was productive of no results, the latter eventually gave him the key to the whole mystery.

"Sent for by Fred Powell, and run off with him—his number one!" he declared, decidedly. "Fred Powell ain't within hundreds of miles of this little burg to my knowledge. But if Fred didn't, who did?—that's the question. Who is interested in Miss Florence Goldthorp, aside from Fred Powell and Tiger Dick?"

Then, as his thoughts became more concentrated, he ceased speaking. Gradually his lips set in harder and harder lines; a slumberous fire began to kindle in his eyes, his form began to dilate and tremble, until, at the culmination of the storm of passion, he brought his fist down on the table with a ringing blow that made everything on it leap, and burst into speech.

"Hah! Is the catfish playing me false? I spared him once (when I thought it to my interest to do so), but if he nigs in *this* game, curse him! I'll let daylight through his traitor carcass on sight! Yet who but he could do this? Pahl he cares nothing for the yellow-haired baby to whom he is engaged, and he as good as told me, on our first meeting, that he loved this one. Curse my stupidity in what I said to him night before last! A man's a fool when he's drunk, anyway! This is the result of it."

"Well, old man," he continued, apostrophizing the absent object of his wrath, "you've got the dead-wood on me this time; but if I don't make it hot for you next hand, just call me a dink, or use my head for a football!"

He struck the table again, and leaping to his feet, began to pace the room.

At this moment the door opened and Shadow Jim entered.

"Hallo, boss! what's the row?" he asked, stopping on the threshold.

"Come in, Jim," said the Tiger, moodily.

"D'ye think it's perfectly safe?" asked Shadow Jim, teasingly. "I thought you was driving piles, by the noise. I don't know whether I want to trust myself alone with you, unless you think you are in a harmless state. What would my friends say, if they was to come in here and find the late lamented Jim all clapped up? Let me tell you that would be a very melancholy occasion—for Jim!"

No one could manage the Tiger, when in a rage, so well as Shadow Jim; and now his look of mock inquiry and apprehension and seriousness restored the irate gambler to good-humor.

"Stow chaff, and come in and shut the door, Jim," he said. "Here is something that will reassure you, I know."

And he pushed a decanter across the table.

"Accepted!" cried Jim, with alacrity; and kicking to the door, he, to use his own expression, "waltzed up to the little lovey and brushed the dew from her sweet lips."

"And now," said the Tiger, "you have heard of this disappearance of Miss Goldthorp?"

"Pard, I have!"

"And do you believe that Fred Powell has had a hand in it?"

For answer, Shadow Jim pulled down the corner of his eye, without removing his lips from the mouth of the bottle, at which he was also "pulling."

"Whom do you spot?"

"Cash!" was the laconic reply.

"My man!" cried the Tiger, with vindictive fire in his eyes. "Jim, we've got to put a hole in him, and hang him up somewhere to drain."

"And we've got a furlough to do it in," said Jim.

"Eh! what do you mean?"

"That we've got all the tricks we're going to get in this game. We've got to pull up stakes and light out for another cleanin', or we'll get bagged, sure."

"What's in the wind now?"

"Why, that sharp from the East (and not so much from the East, either, according to my calculation) has got jest the 'cutest' little game put up on us that you ever see!—I mean Billy Saunderson's bosom friend. It ain't the first time he's held the ribbons, old hoss, now I can tell ye! He's only waiting to get the pins all in a row—and he'll git 'em there, pard! he'll git 'em there, if we don't step out o' line mighty lively—and then he'll rake 'em in, body and breeches! There won't be no mourners; you can bet your bottom red on that!"

"And when does he propose to call the board?" asked Tiger Dick.

"Who's to be our next President?" responded Shadow Jim, indicating by his reply that he had no means of judging when the detective would move.

"Look-a-here, pard," said the Tiger, an ugly look coming into his eyes, "if this sharp goes to bucking against me, he'll find that I wasn't kicked up hill and down dale in the mountains for fifteen years to be scared out by a flat in the States. I should hate awfully to turn tail, Jim, and we don't learn to crawfish out in the diggins!"

"It's a knowin' sharp that cries quits when he's beat, Dick."

"But who says we're beat?" persisted the Tiger.

"Why, look at the run o' the cards yourself. There's no chance o' gittin' anything more than we've got already; you're booked for pulling the bank; and the rest of us will be dancin' on nothing for taking moonlight strolls on Dead Man's Bluff, the first thing we know. I tell ye, that sharp has handled jest as cunnin' fellers as you and me in his day. Anyway he can play jest as lively music as we want to jig to, or I lose my guess."

"Well, there's nothing to stay for, as you say, and we've got to lay for the Prince; so I guess that ends the matter."

"By the way, I done a little runnin' around before I came in, and found out that Pat Donovan's hack and Pat Donovan's precious self are out of town."

"Which means the Prince and Goldthorp?"

"Nothing else."

"I suppose there's no use in our going to that hole in the ground? Of course he's made off with the sachel."

"Being a cashier, it would come natural for him to look after the rhino, you know," replied Shadow Jim, with a wink and a grin.

"When you find him, you'll find that he has froze to it, take my word."

"Well, here goes!" said the Tiger, rising from the table briskly.

He and his satellite then made a toilet that would have struck an observer as very remarkable. While apparently dressed in simple walking suits, they had secreted about their persons disguises enough to puzzle a whole police force. With a last look about the room, they passed out, locking the door; and half an hour afterward, had any person presented himself at "The Jungle" for Tiger Dick and Shadow Jim, he would have had to look for them with very little prospect of success.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 271.)

The Flying Yankee:

OR,

THE OCEAN OUTCAST.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM.

CHAPTER XVI.

AN UNEXPECTED FOE.

FRENCH and fiercer grew the combat; louder and louder roared the guns; wilder and wilder resounded the cheers of the American and English crews as the contest continued, and the interested lookers-on from the decks of the Sea-Slipper feared the two frigates would bodily sink each other, ere either one would strike his colors; but, no, the American vessel, smaller in size, as well as weaker in guns and men, at length was observed to become unmanageable, and the next moment fell off so that her powerful adversary raked her decks from stern to bow, for her rudder had been shot away.

A few murderous discharges from the guns of the Englishman, and then, in stentorian tones, came the hail:

"Do you strike?"

"We are helpless—I surrender the ship!" answered a seamanlike voice from the American decks, and a loud cheer broke forth from the English frigate, and was echoed by their comrades upon the Sea-Slipper. A cheer that suddenly turned into a wail—a cry, loud and orders, a clash of small arms, as suddenly, out of the sulphurous smoke of combat, appeared the shadowy outlines of a vessel, that with wonderful skill was brought alongside the towering hull of the victorious frigate, and more than a hundred white forms clambered upon her blood-stained decks.

Taken by surprise, unable to account for the sudden and mysterious appearance of the schooner, and believing wholly in the supernatural, the frigate's crew was driven pell-mell across the decks ere the slightest resistance was offered to their strange foes, who were headed by a tall form, armed with sword and pistols, that dealt death mercilessly around him.

"On! on! my men! Cut down every man who resists!" cried the leader in ringing tones, and once more he sprang into the midst of the English crew, who had now begun to rally beneath the orders of their officers.

But in vain their resistance, for, unable to withstand the terrible onslaught, they were driven aft to the quarter-deck, their own guns were turned upon them, and at length the brave captain, who, a few moments before,

was demanding the surrender of a conquered enemy, was compelled to haul down his ensign to a man that had vanquished him upon his own decks!

"I am Sir Edgar Le Lacey, and this is his British majesty's line-of-battle-ship Pochontas. To whom do I surrender my sword, sir?" said the vanquished Englishman, stepping forward, and gazing upon the crimson-masked face of his conqueror.

The victor tried to speak, his hand was outstretched, but, with a low moan, he staggered forward and would have fallen, had he not been caught in the arms of Commodore Cutting, who had that moment come on board from his ship, to see the cause of disturbance on the Englishman, whose large hull and heavy rigging had concealed the schooner from his view.

"God above! Noel Moncrief!" ejaculated the astonished commodore, as he tore the mask from the face of the wounded man and recognized the fainting form in his arms. At the request of the English officer he bore Noel into the spacious cabin and laid him upon a lounge, when the surgeon was summoned to attend him, for he was wounded severely in the side.

The next moment Lieutenant Muriel dashed into the cabin, exclaiming:

"What! Captain Noel dead?"

"No, he is severely wounded; are you his lieutenant?" answered Sir Edgar De Lacey.

"I am, sir; you will surrender your sword to me, if you please," haughtily but politely returned the young Spaniard, as he removed from his face its silken covering.

"May I ask the name of your schooner and the commander that has taken a ship of the line?"

"Certainly, sir; it is the craft known as the Flying Yankee, and this gentleman lying here is Captain Noel, her commander."

Without a word the English officer surrendered his sword, which Muriel, taking, immediately returned to its owner with a light compliment; and then, turning to Commodore Cutting, who stood near, said:

"I believe you are the commanding officer of the squadron that engaged this vessel?"

"I am Commodore Cutting, sir, and the frigate alongside is my flag-ship."

"You will then be kind enough to take command of this prize, and with your permission I will now remove Captain Noel on board his own vessel, and depart."

"Not so fast, young man, for this gentleman is too seriously wounded to be moved, and besides he shall no longer dodge the reward of his numerous gallant services to his government, now that it is known that Noel Moncrief, the Ocean Rover, is suddenly broke in the stern voice of the wounded man, and turning quickly at the words all beheld that he had recovered from his unconsciousness and was gazing at the American commander firmly in the face."

"My noble boy! Gladly do I welcome you back into the service of your country—"

"Hold! Commodore Cutting! Have you forgotten I fled my land, Cain-acursed—"

"My God! have you not heard that your brother recovered, and—"

"Great God, I thank Thee! I am not then a very Cain," and Noel buried his head in the silken cushions of his couch.

"No, Noel; Clarence recovered wholly from his wound, and, chastened by his afflictions, he banished himself from the world and became a priest of the church of Rome, while your father and his ward are now near by, for they sailed from Mobile in the Sea-Slipper, which was the cause of our desperate combat with our brave foe here."

"God, again I thank Thee!" once more murmured the happy man, who so long had been a wanderer, Cain-acursed, as he believed.

Beckoning to the English commander and Hernando Muriel to follow him, Commodore Cutting ascended to the deck and gave orders for the disposition of the English crews and care of the wounded; after which he made known to Sir Edgar and the young Spaniard the strange story of Noel Moncrief's life, a story which the young lieutenant of the Flying Yankee heard for the first time, for of his past Noel had never spoken.

"His life indeed has been a strange romance, and of startling interest, and I now wonder not at his earnest desire to remain incognito, though serving America with wonderful skill and energy," remarked the English nobleman, who, then turning suddenly toward Muriel, continued: "Lieutenant, the career of your vessel has been overhung with mystery, and if not asking too much I would beg you to answer several puzzling questions."

"Ay, ay, young sir; explain, may it please you, how it was you made even educated minds believe in a supernatural agency ruling the destiny of your beautiful craft," said Commodore Cutting, with interest, gazing into the mainly face of the young officer.

"Assuredly, gentlemen, I will explain, for mystery with us now is at an end."

"The craft lying there, and known as the Flying Yankee, was once the schooner Red Wing—"

"That the resemblance between the two is now disclosed," exclaimed Commodore Cutting.

"Yes, sir, the Red Wing of the Mexican service formerly and the Flying Yankee are the same schooner, which, when Captain Noel—Moncrief, I believe, is his true name—resigned from the services of the Mexicans, he metamorphosed into the present weird-looking craft, which he at once ran under his private colors, and made war upon England."

"A terrible foe he proved, too, and one whose deeds would win him an admiral's commission on our side the water; but the mystery of his being able to carry his poles enveloped in canvas sufficient to run under a ship of the line—explain that, please, lieutenant," and the Englishman seemed deeply interested.

"That is easy of explanation, sir, and I will give you ocular demonstration of the circumstance, as it now is nearly sunrise. Ho! the Flying Yankee!" and the clear voice of the young officer rung out sharp in the crisp morning air.

"Ay, ay, sir!" answered the voice of Mr. Hart from the schooner, which was lying to, a cable's length from the frigate.

"Get out your mask sails on the schooner."

"Ay, ay, sir!" came the response, and almost immediately a perfect network of sails was put upon the beautiful vessel, so closely woven as at a short distance to resemble real canvas, and cause one to believe the schooner was really spread with white duck.

"I see, I see! Remarkable indeed. Lieutenant, your commander is a wonderful man."

"So we all think, Sir Edgar," modestly replied Muriel, while the American commodore put in:

"But the smoke and spectral light that always hung about your craft when seen either by night or day, sir?"

"Easily explained, commodore. We were

in the habit of burning bright lights that cast a reflection through colored glass, and the smoke we manufactured by burning wool that had been dampened and placed in iron vessels on various parts of the decks. These tricks, added to our network sails, the wonderful speed of the schooner, our men clothed in white, and with their faces hidden beneath crimson masks, rendered us, doubtless, a most spectral and scare-to-death craft and crew," and the young Spaniard laughed lightly.

"Indeed it did, and I for one am glad to know the secret, and truly glad to welcome back to the navy Noel Moncrief, who shall command his schooner if he recovers, and God grant he may, with his brave men, and no longer be an ocean rover, but an honored officer of the United States navy. But time flies, and there is much for us to do, so, Sir Edgar, you will oblige me by retaining command of your vessel, temporarily repairing damages, and following me back to Mobile, to which port the Flying Yankee, under command of her gallant lieutenant here, must lead the way."

BIDDIE'S LETTER.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

Och, Pat, I got your letter
All folded so close and neat,
And as full of love and affection
As a butcher shop's full of meat.

I read it backward and forward,
And it read ever the same,
Each word began with a capital,
Oh, Pat, except me name.

And yet 'twas a capital letter,
And I wish I had more of the sort;
Six weeks ahead it was dated,
And the length of the letter was short.

I opened it very careful,
For fear the thing would explode,
And let out the love that was in it
That came such a very long road.

And every word was printed,
And the words I couldn't make out
Were as sweet as the balance of them,
As you meant them to be, no doubt.

I read it upside downwards,
And then I turned it around,
And it breathed the breath of Patrick
Who dances on Irish ground.

My eyes were as damp, my darling,
As the plates I just put away,
That letter was like a beefsteak—
That's a very rare done, I'd say.

Your thoughts are as bright as a dishpan,
And they glow like the kitchen fire;
That letter is just the reference
That an Irish girl should require.

I would lose my situation
For another letter like that,
Though you write the words the wrong way
With more ink than love in them, Pat.

I've read it over and under
Till there's nothing left in it at all,
And then the post prescription
Was as dear as a borrowed shawl.

Write again a post-office letter,
And fill it as full as you can,
With love, if it costs double postage,
And I'll think you a brother of a man!

LEAVES

From an Actor's Life;
OR,
Recollections of Plays and Players.

BY GEO. L. AIKEN.

VII.—The Boston Theater, Federal Street, the "Old Drury" of the City—Its Stage My Boyhood's Play-ground—The Plays and Players Who Were Famous There—The Curfew—The Mountaineers—Junius Brutus Booth—His Eccentricities

THE Tremont Theater had its day, was dismantled, and turned into a music hall, and I became familiar with the Federal street theater—the Boston Theater was its name, and also called the "Old Drury" of the city, after Drury Lane Theater of London.

My uncle, Mr. Fox—father of Geo. L. Fox, the now famous *Humpty Dumpty*—was property man of the Federal street theater, and had general supervision over the building in the daytime, and he lived in a portion of the building, the entrance to the dwelling part being on what was then called Theater alley.

A row of stately warehouses was erected on the site of the old theater building the last time I was in Boston, and the locality was changed beyond my power of recollection. Since then the great fire swept through that district.

I do not suppose there is a vestige of Boston's "Old Drury" remaining, and the famous actors of that time have also passed away. My cousin George and myself, with other children, had the free run of the stage, in the daytime, and many a game of "Tag" and "Coram" have we had amid the old and dusty scenery.

I never appeared in any child characters on this stage—though I did as a man, in after years, and was concerned in the last performance given within its walls by a theatrical company.

On this stage the early celebrities of the drama in Boston had achieved their reputations. I heard them spoken of—many that died before I was born—and their names linger now in my memory.

There was Canfield, Fox, Poe, Bernard, Dykes, Morgan, Vining, Turnbull, Usher, Dickerson, Downie and Barnes among the men; and Powell, Stanley, Bassett and Henry among the women.

There was Duff, who was a great representative of the character of "Marmion," in a play dramatized from Sir Walter Scott's poem of that name; and his handsome and talented wife, May, who was considered as good a tragedy queen as ever walked a stage.

I remember the quaint old plays acted there, which are never presented now, and their very names are forgotten. There was the "Curfew," written by John Tobin, the author of the "Honeymoon"—the only play of his that still holds its place in the theater, and then very much abbreviated and condensed.

"The Gamester," "The Mountaineers," "Inkle and Yarico," and other plays long since discarded from the list of the acting dramas.

In the play of "The Mountaineers" I first saw Junius Brutus Booth, the great rival of Edmund Kean. He acted the character of Octavian. The play of "The Mountaineers" was written by George Colman, the younger—as he was called to distinguish him from his father, who was also a dramatic author, and he was very popular in his day. Many of his productions still retain possession of the stage; among which are "The Poor Gentleman" and "The Heir at Law." Both of these plays are still enjoyable when presented by a good company. They require good actors, however, and cannot be made secondary to fine scenery and costumes like so many plays of the present day.

The play of "The Mountaineers" though very good of its kind, is by no means of the same literary caliber as the two comedies I have mentioned. It is a kind of mongrel play, interspersed with singing by several nondescript comic characters, and is founded upon an incident in Cervantes' celebrated romance of Don Quixote.

The character of Octavian used to be a favorite one with tragedians in those days, though I could never see anything in it worthy of a good actor's exertion. He is supposed to be a young man, who, thinking himself slighted by his lady-love, turns hermit, and secludes himself in a cave in the forest, dresses himself in the skin of an animal, and deports himself in a crazy and ridiculous manner generally, and uses such language as:

"Should the giant wolf cross lovers in their path,
I'd rend his rugged jaws asunder,
That he no more might bay the moon with howling!"

The peculiar nasal twang to Junius Brutus Booth's voice gave this, and kindred speeches, a very telling effect; but this was by no means his great character.

I much preferred him in "Richard III.," "Sir Edward Mortimer," in the "Iron Chest," (another play of George Colman, the younger, by the way, and this, like "The Mountain-

ers," was founded upon a novel, once popular, "Caleb Williams," written by an author named Goodwin,) "King Lear" and "Brutus, or the Fall of Tarquin."

In the character of "Junius Brutus" Booth was grand. When his father christened him with the name he little thought, I imagine, that he would ever personate that stern Roman father, who sacrificed his affection to his sense of duty and sentenced his traitorous son to death, and gave the signal himself for his execution.

In his turn he named his eldest son Junius Brutus, but, unfortunately for J. B., Jr., he could not transmit his genius with the name. No one was more conscious of this fact than the junior Junius Brutus.

"The public expect too much of me because my name is Booth, and I am my father's son," he used to say; but he was a very good actor, for all that, and a great favorite at the old National Theater in Boston. I shall describe this theater in due course, as a part of my career in Boston was on the stage of this old established Thespian temple.

The mantle of Junius Brutus Booth descended to his son Edwin. He now outranks his father in fame.

I have said that the elder Booth was the great rival of Edmund Kean. There were many resemblances in their style of acting, and Booth was charged with being an imitator. This charge induced him to visit America, and he was received with favor here—a favor which he always retained despite his eccentricity of disappointing an audience occasionally. If Edmund Kean had the best of it in England, Booth had decidedly the best of it in America.

He was so well satisfied with his reception in this country that he purchased a homestead near Baltimore, Maryland, and became a citizen.

In his hours of leisure from his profession he cultivated his ground and became quite a farmer, driving a wagon, loaded with his produce to market, and disposing of it there as if this was the business in which he had always been engaged.

This was an eccentricity which was by no means peculiar to him. I have known a great many actors whose sole ambition for the future was to realize enough to buy a farm and retire from the stage.



"Traitor to your country, we meet at last!"

But Junius Brutus Booth never retired. He was on his way to fulfill an engagement when death overtook him.

The Oath Of the Tlascalan.

BY C. D. CLARK.

THE sun, the god of the Aztecs, was going down in a blaze of glory behind the Cholul hills. On the right, the great pyramid of Cholul lifted its truncated head, and on the plain below it, in grand array, stretched out the army of Cortez. That band of adventurers; cruel, rapacious, brave as lions, proud as Lucifer; knightly in their veneration of woman, pious to the extreme of bigotry, the strangest mixture of good and evil yet found in any race of men under the sun. The cavaliers in their armor; the footmen, with their short mail coats, steel caps, and knee-guards; the arquebusers, the germ of the infantry of our day; the pages, squires and grooms, who were passing to and fro among the tents; the neighing of steeds, the flashing of steel, and the banners fluttering in the rays of the declining sun, all combined to form an imposing picture. Behind these lay their Tlascalan allies, in all their half-barbarous array.

Cortez was in his tent, with his chief captains about him. On the right stood Alvarado, the right hand of the grand captain, his golden beard gleaming like molten gold.

The face of Cortez was clouded with anxiety, and he looked inquiringly at the doorway of the tent, as if expecting some one to enter. He had not long to wait, for the curtain was swept aside, and a soldier appeared.

"How now, Manuel?" demanded Cortez.

"Has Mariana come?"

"No, excellenza," replied the soldier. "But the Tlascalan chief, Quetzal, asks to be admitted."

Cortez sprang to his feet with a wild cry. "Quetzal! Is he alone?"

"He is, excellenza."

"Let him enter. By our lady, if the dog has betrayed me, and Mariana is taken, I will tear him all to pieces."

The soldier stepped aside, and a powerful form filled the doorway—the form of a man of giant frame, in the garb of an Aztec chief. That dress consisted of loose trousers of the Turkish style, made of native cloth, a tight-fitting tunic of the same material, with a belt about the waist; and sandals of tough bull-hide. Over the tunic he wore a sort of sleeveless cloak, which left his brawny arms bare. The only arms he bore was the strong bow at his back. Upon his left arm he bore a shield, upon which was emblazoned a representation of the rising sun. In his right hand he carried a heavy club, with small pieces of flint, shaped like shark's teeth, set in the upper end. This was a terrible weapon of war, and was used like a two-handed sword by most men.

The chief had a noble face, haughty and proud, and his dark hair, uncut, fell upon his shoulders. There was a gory mark upon his brow, and the breast of his tunic was stained with blood.

"You have come, Quetzal!" cried Cortez. "How have you dared to come to me alone, when you know that I show no mercy? Where is Mariana, the princess I gave into your care?"

"Spaniard," replied Quetzal, haughtily, "I am a man who can die bravely, if need be. Mariana is taken, but I should deserve a dog's death if I did not come to tell you how it changed."

"Speak then, and be not over-tedious."

"Mariana is taken by Hualta, the lord of Cholul. Hualta hath sworn an oath that Mariana shall die, because she hath disgraced her blood by taking shelter in the bosom of an enemy."

"Look you, chief," cried Cortez; "you swore to me that you would conduct Mariana safe from Tlascala to Cholul. You have betrayed your trust, and deserve death; but I will give you a chance. What will Hualta do with Mariana?"

"He will take her to the mountains, and there sacrifice her to the Mexican god of war."

"Do you know the place of sacrifice?"

"I do."

"Enough, then; I lay this work upon you, to follow and save Mariana from the hands of her enemies. As for me, I have made a vow never to turn aside from the work I have to do, and even for my love of her I may not break that vow. Do you swear that if you cannot save her, you will return to meet my vengeance?"

"I swear it," replied Quetzal, raising his hand on high. "If I cannot rescue Mariana, I can die with her. If I do not die, I will return to you, and meet any fate you have to give me. If I do not return, send horsemen to the altar in the Cholulan mountains, and there you will find my bones. My son will guide you men to the spot."

"Go!" said Cortez, briefly.

The chief threw his club over his shoulder, cast a haughty glance about him, and was gone. The word passed through the lines to let him pass, and once free of the camp, he plunged into the gloomy depths of the forest.

side you now. But a time shall come when I shall meet him, and try strength with him."

"You dare not, for your life."

"I ask you once more to be my bride. If you refuse, the blazing altar awaits you," hissed Hualta.

"I accept the torture. Better die here, by the hands of these unholy priests, than accept a death in life by your side. I have abjured your unholy rites and ceremonies. I am a Christian woman, and as a Christian woman I will die."

"Die, then, vile woman. Betrayer of your country, prepare to meet your fate."

At his signal, one of the priests advanced, with a bare knife in his hand. The monster had slain many victims, and there was a smile of demoniac malice upon his face, as he approached. Mariana took a step in advance, and met him boldly. The knife was raised above her heart, when the twang of a bow string was heard, and a broad headed arrow was buried to the feather in the bosom of the priest.

The other, who had followed him, uttered a howl of dismay, and concealed himself among the rocks, while the gigantic form of Quetzal bounded into view, his sun shield before his breast, brandishing his huge club as if it had been a feather. One of the warriors sprang at him, and went down, his skull beaten in by the tremendous blow which fell upon it.

"Fly, Mariana!" cried Quetzal. "Cortez awaits you at Cholul."

She darted down the path from which he had come, when she slipped and fell heavily. Dealing a tremendous blow at the head of Hualta, under which he reeled and half fell, Quetzal caught up the prostrate girl, and ran down the pass like a madman. The other warrior sprang to aid his chief, but Hualta waved him back.

"With me, Tuacalla," he cried. "Together we will hunt this wolf to his death."

They bounded down the pass in close pursuit of the fugitive Tlascalan. He heard the quick patter of their feet, and knew that he could not escape them, impeded by the weight of the injured girl.

"I must turn and fight, Mariana," he cried.

"Can you not fly now?"

She made no answer, and, looking at her face, he saw that she had fainted. There was no hope now, unless he could conquer the two men in pursuit, both of them renowned warriors, Tuacalla bearing a reputation but little inferior to that of the great chief whom he followed.

Placing Mariana upon the earth in a sitting posture, supported by the rocks, he raised his sun shield before his breast, and, whirling his war club above his head, awaited the rush of his enemies, who were now close at hand.

First came Hualta, his shield upraised, and his right hand grasping the ponderous war club. On his right, holding his spear ready for a thrust, stood Tuacalla. Quetzal stood there boldly, his eyes flashing defiance at his foes.

"Dog!" cried Hualta. "Traitor to your country, we meet at last."

"Welcome, Hualta," replied the gallant chief. "Quetzal and you will not part easily, be sure of that."

His weapon descended upon the shield of Hualta with such force that, for the moment, his arm was paralyzed, and he could hardly hold the shield. Quetzal bounded aside, and rushed at Tuacalla. The thrust of his long spear was received upon the shield, and giving it a quick wrench, the shaft of the weapon was broken.

Tuacalla drew his knife, but what could that avail against the strong arm of Quetzal? One blow, strong, sure and deadly, and Tuacalla had gone to the spirit land. But, while he had darted aside to strike down Tuacalla, Hualta had recovered from the stunning effect of the first blow which he had received, and again rushed upon Quetzal, while his weapon was yet lowered after the blow which he had dealt Tuacalla. He could only interpose his shield, which burst from its fastenings, under the descending weapon of Hualta, and Quetzal dropped upon his knee. The Cholulan heaved up his weapon to repeat the blow, when Quetzal darted the edge of his shield against his breast, with such force that he was hurled three paces backward, staggering like a drunken man. Before he could recover, Quetzal was again on his feet, but his left arm hung powerless, and he was no longer able to uplift his round sun shield. But his right arm was strong, and he made his weapon play about his head with dazzling swiftness.

"Cholula's daughters will weep for the great chief Hualta," cried Quetzal, with a wild laugh. "I care not for the shield, for with this I can make a wall about me. Coward; keep your shield."

Hualta flung away his shield.

"Never shall it be said that Hualta, the Cholulan, feared to meet a Tlascalan on equal terms," he said.

Mariana rose slowly from the earth, and looked at them as they clashed together. It was a battle of giants, for the Cholulan was fully the equal of Quetzal in length of limb. The great weapons clashed together with terrible force, and small splinters flew from the sharp edges of the *teztli*. The left arm of Hualta dropped useless by his side, and he felt his strength failing fast. He must conquer soon, or all hope was over. Grasping the huge club with both hands, he rushed desperately upon the brave Tlascalan, and struck him a terrible

blow, so frightful that a cry of agony burst from the lips of Mariana. But, manning himself with an effort, and shouting his terrible battle cry, his weapon descended upon the unguarded head of Hualta, and the proud lord of Cholul lay dead at the feet of the Tlascalan chief.

Quetzal dropped his weapon, and glared wildly about him. The beat of hoofs could be heard, and the golden beard of Alvarado gleamed, as he spurred his horse up the rocky pass, ahead of his men.

"Come, come!" cried Quetzal. "She is here, and safe. Say to Cortez that the Tlascalan chief has kept his oath."

Before Alvarado could reach him, he fell like a strong tower, and lay extended upon the rocks at his feet. The brave chief, his duty done, lay dead before the fair woman whom he had so bravely defended. The cavaliers took up the body, and rode sadly back to camp; and when they buried him, every head was bowed in sadness, for they knew that a gallant man had gone home.

A Race With a Grizzly.

BY GEORGE W. BROWNE.

WE had been at Wilson's Creek four or five days, when one pleasant afternoon, as Hadley and Reckless Ray, accompanied by Kirwan, were out to their traps, Max proposed that he and I should take a hunt together. I assured him that nothing would suit me better; and, accordingly, we left camp immediately.

Game having become scarce in the immediate vicinity of the camping-ground, it was necessary to make a larger *detour* than had been formerly done. Thus, before we had seen anything worth shooting, Max and I found ourselves some distance from camp, and approaching an elevated, broken tract of land, which extended back toward the Black Hills. This we soon reached, and at the base of the hill we separated, Max taking a more northerly course, and going round on the other side; while I kept on straight ahead.

(Here permit me to say that Wilson's Creek has its source in the Black Hills; and after flowing in a southerly direction, through a fertile valley, its waters finally find their way to the south fork of the Platte. Owing to the rich pasture the valley affords for their animals, and the abundance of beaver, it made a place much sought for by the trappers. But unfortunately for them, it was ground hotly contested by the fierce Sioux; though at the time I write they appeared to be on friendly terms.)

After leaving Max I traveled on for some distance, following a sort of path that kept well up on the side of the hill. I had seen nothing worth shooting, and was walking leisurely along, looking to the right and left alternately, when I suddenly turned an abrupt angle in the path, and—stood directly in front of a huge grizzly bear.

My meeting the bear so sudden completely unnerved me for an instant; but quickly recovering myself, I prepared for the fight which, I knew, was inevitable. The grizzly was so near to me that I could have easily touched him with my rifle where I stood. The moment he saw me he rose upon his hind-legs, with a fierce growl. Quick as thought, I brought my rifle to shoulder, and, taking hasty aim, fired directly at the brute's breast. Almost simultaneous with the report, the grizzly, with a sweep of his paw, sent my rifle whirling from me. But I saw the red blood spurt from a wound in his breast, and I knew that my shot had taken effect; though it did not for an instant check his course, only seemed to madden him, as, with another fierce growl, he bounded upon me.

I had no intention of a grapple with the grizzly, as long as it could be avoided, so I took to my heels, starting down the rough hill-side in an oblique course, shouting for help, hoping Max might hear me and come to my rescue.

I soon found that my race with the grizzly must necessarily be a short one; for he was so close upon me, that he almost touched me at every bound he made. But as long as I kept descending the hill I could keep out of his way; though I knew that as soon as I came upon level or rising ground it would be "all day" with me. Thus my only hope lay in keeping out of reach of the grizzly, by running a diagonal course down the hill, till Max should hear my cries, and come to my aid; or else, by some unexpected chance, be enabled to escape him.

I had given up all hope of escaping the grizzly, and had made up my mind to turn and fight him with my knife, when, as I was looking back over my shoulder, I saw that he was just in the act of springing upon me. Suddenly, at that moment, not paying attention to where I was going, I stepped down over a rock, and fell prostrate to the earth. I have a dim consciousness of seeing a dark object pass over me, then my senses left me.

I was brought back to consciousness by hearing a loud "hallo," from the hill above me. Arising on my elbow, I answered it; and a moment later Max came hurrying toward me.

"What's the trouble, Wal—Wheh! a whop-pin' grizzly," were Max's first words, as he reached my side and saw the grizzly, laying a short distance from me. The grizzly was dead, my shot having proved a fatal one. But with that wonderful tenacity of life, so remarkable in the grizzly, he had withstood the fatal drain of blood, till making his headlong leap, when exhausted nature could support him no longer, and he had to succumb.

After considerable searching I found my rifle, which, fortunately, was not seriously damaged, though the stock was pretty badly cracked. But the hunt was up for that day, so I had time to mend it before I wanted to use it again.

The best way to get capital is to work for it. Work for wages till you have money of your own. To use another's capital, if you lose it you must replace it. When a man finds he owes more than he can pay, he begins to inquire how he can get rid of his debt. If all he has will not pay all he owes, then less than all, he thinks, will pay a part, and he hides a portion or all from creditors. Learn to make money a year before you spend it, then you will buy less and buy cheaper. Other things being equal, dishonesty prevails in proportion to the facilities for escaping obligations. The wise man has said that the "borrower is servant to the lender," and he ought to be till he returns what he has borrowed. When one has had the benefit of another's labor, property, person, skill and all are bound for the equivalent. The ancient Roman and Jewish codes held that a man's life and labor should be bound for his debts. This may appear, and sometimes is, severe; but strict justice says: "What doth the Lord thy God require of thee but to do justly?" "Owe no man anything," if you can help it.